

SOCIALIST★APPEAL

NO MORE FLAG WAVING!



FIGHT THE TORIES WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES!



SOCIALIST★APPEAL

WHO ARE WE? and WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

Bold measures are required to deal with the coronavirus crisis. Only a clear socialist programme can offer a way forward.

We must have no faith in the Tories or their hangers on, whose worship of the market has brought the country to its knees.

- No trust or confidence in the Tories and their big business backers!
- Instead of attacking the left, Labour must provide genuine opposition to this shambolic Tory government. Support workers in the fight to put lives before profits!

The bosses and their craven political representatives have shown that they will always prioritise profits over lives. We demand socialist measures to protect workers, and put health before wealth.

- For a fully publicly-owned and free health service, under workers' control and management. Reverse all privatisation and outsourcing. All private health and care services must be nationalised without compensation, and integrated into the NHS.
- Nationalise the pharmaceutical companies – without compensation – in order to ensure that vaccines are produced rapidly and made freely available to all worldwide.
- Reverse the austerity inflicted upon public services. Launch a fully-funded training programme for doctors, nurses, paramedics, medical staff, and carers, with decent pay and hours, to increase staffing levels across the board. New hospitals must be urgently built.
- The reopening of workplaces should be in the hands of workplace committees and the trade unions. And it must be based on the implementation of health and safety measures and a safe working environment. The costs for this must be paid by the bosses.
- For safe work or full pay on a living

wage. Any restrictions must be accompanied by measures to provide for workers affected by closures. This means 100% wage support for those furloughed, as well as full sick pay to those required to isolate.

- To fight job cuts and the threat of mass unemployment following the lockdown, work should be shared out without any loss of pay, in order to lower the hours of the working week.
- Fight for the real emancipation of women. Remove all barriers to women working: provide free nurseries, after-school childcare, and care for the elderly. End all forms of discrimination; equal pay for work of equal value.
- Scrap tuition fees and rents, and replace these with free education and full maintenance grants for all. Put staff in control in schools and universities.
- Ban evictions and cancel housing debts. Give local authorities the power to cap rents at affordable levels. And bring empty properties and the assets of the big landlords and management companies under public control.
- Many small businesses are faced with bankruptcy, with banks resisting any extensions of credit. Many are squeezed not only by the banks, but by the big monopolies. By nationalising the banks we can supply these small businesses with the lifeline of guaranteed low-interest credit.
- The financial resources required to fight the crisis must not come from increased taxes or more austerity, but through the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses. Rather than a 'wealth tax', we call for the expropriation of the monopolies.
- Instead of building up the national debt through government borrowing, the money needed should be obtained entirely from expropriating the accumulated profits of big business.

■ If the bosses say they can't afford to pay for workers' wages, we say: open up the books! Let the working class and the labour movement see the accounts! If firms plead bankruptcy, they should not be bailed out, but nationalised under workers' control.

■ No to austerity! The working class must not pay for this crisis!

■ For the trade unions and Labour Party to organise a mass struggle to bring down this criminal Tory government. Organise the unorganised!

It is clear that the market has failed and capitalism is in a deep crisis. The anarchy of capitalism prevents the planning of society's resources, in Britain and internationally.

■ We therefore stand for the nationalisation of the 100 biggest monopolies, banks, utilities, landlords and so on – under workers' control and management – and without compensation. On this basis, the economy can be democratically planned in the interests of the majority, and not for the super profits of a few.

■ A Socialist Federation of Britain should be linked to a Socialist United States of Europe and a World Socialist Federation, in order to plan resources internationally for the benefit of all. This would put an end to barbarism of capitalism and allow humanity to begin solving the urgent issues of climate change, disease, and poverty that face society and our planet.

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JOIN US TODAY!

MASS STRUGGLE NEEDED TO DEFEAT TORY ANTI-PROTEST LAW

FIGHT BACK! DEFEND THE RIGHT TO PROTEST!

Socialist Appeal

Over the past few weeks, demonstrations have taken place across the country to protest the draconian Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

This new legislation would dramatically curtail the right to demonstrate and picket.

Crucially, it also shines a spotlight on the institution of the police. Far from protecting and serving communities, the police have all-too-often engaged in brutal violence against them.

Similarly, recent events – from the suppression of a peaceful vigil at Clapham Common in the wake of Sarah Everard's

murder (allegedly by a Met Police officer); to the police brutality against protestors in Bristol – have also exposed the real role of the police.

As one protestor correctly commented: "It's ridiculous to assert that more police is the answer in response to police violence. That didn't protect Sarah Everard."

Many have called for continued demonstrations – and this is correct. But these must be connected to a broader struggle by the labour movement.

The Labour Party and trade unions should be mobilising and organising activists *en masse*, in order to draw in even wider layers in the fight against this anti-protest legislation, and against all the

anti-union laws that are already in place, utilised by the bosses to repress workers.

This should be linked to a mass campaign of strikes and protests – with the aim not only of defeating this latest Tory bill, but bringing down this whole rotten government.

Such a show of strength by the working class could pressure the government into a U-turn. After all, there is no force on earth more powerful than the working class, when it is organised and mobilised.

The recent demonstrations have offered a glimpse of the anger that exists in society. But in order to channel this energy and smash this Tory bill, the movement needs bold, militant leadership. ■

REPORTS FROM DEMONSTRATIONS: KILL THE BILL!

Socialist Appeal

Supporters

Over the past few weeks, demonstrations took place across the country in defence of the right to protest. Below are just a few reports from Socialist Appeal activists who attended the recent Kill the Bill protests in London, Bristol, and Sheffield.

London

On Saturday 3 April, thousands marched in London from Hyde Park to Parliament Square to protest the draconian Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

There was a clearly militant mood amongst protestors, with many drawing radical conclusions about the real role of the police and these new Tories laws: to serve the interests of the ruling class.

Many young people had travelled from Kent and Birmingham to join Saturday's protest. Those demonstrating were fully aware that this legislation comes not from a place of confidence amongst the ruling class, but from fear.

There were several fiery speeches at the protest. But those by Jeremy Corbyn and Howard Beckett (the assistant general secretary of Unite the Union) stood out the most.

Corbyn rightly pointed out that not a single reform has ever

been granted from above without struggle from below. He related this to the Peterloo massacre, the Tolpuddle Martyrs, the revolutionary movement of the Chartists, and the mass mobilisation in defence of the Pentonville Five.

Connecting with the radical mood on the demo, the former Labour leader even pointed out how illegal resistance was sometimes necessary.

Howard Beckett, meanwhile, sharply attacked the hypocrisy and double standards of the justice system under capitalism.

For example, the Met Police and Tory government have used COVID restrictions as an excuse to trample on the right to protest. At the same time, not a single boss had

faced punishment for forcing workers into unsafe conditions, despite thousands of complaints.

Bristol

Over 3,000 came to latest #KillTheBill protest in Bristol. A welcome addition to this protest were banners from a handful of trade unions and one Labour Party, as well as Bristol Socialist Appeal.

That such numbers turned out for the fifth protest in the city within two weeks – and in the face of brutal attacks from the police – is testament to the determination of activists to consign this bill to the dustbin of history.

The police were noticeable this time by their low profile: no dogs, horses, or riot police



were visible. No doubt this was a result of the growing backlash against their thugish behaviour at previous protests, which has included attacks on journalists.

In addition, the police have been shown to be blatant liars, forced to meekly admit that the widely reported 'serious injuries' suffered by officers during the first protest – including alleged broken bones and a punctured lung – hadn't happened after all.

This only adds to the shameful response of those Labour leaders – locally and nationally – who jumped the gun and joined the establishment's hand-wringing about 'violence', without asking: 'whose violence?'

Sheffield

On Saturday 3 April, hundreds of people marched through Sheffield city centre.

This came a week after an almost thousand-strong protest in the city.

Protesters held signs denouncing the rise of a 'police state' in Britain. And chants of "Priti Patel, go to hell" could be heard as the march progressed through town.

The radical energy amongst workers and youth was also expressed in Sheffield, as elsewhere, by blocking major city centre roads, including the road outside a local police station.

Far from being angered by this, commuters and bus drivers beeped in approval. And many onlookers joined the march to hear the concluding speeches.

Overall, the protest showed the intense indignation of people in Sheffield towards the new crime bill, and towards

the injustice the working class – especially women and minorities – face at the hands of police.

The struggles against racism, the oppression of women, police brutality, and big business were all linked together by those protesting. This reflects the growing realisation that these struggles need to be united, as part of a wider fight to topple the rotten capitalist system.

Sheffield workers and youth have shown their determination to fight back against state violence and capitalist exploitation. To do this, we must link these particular struggles against injustice and oppression to the class struggle, and the need to transform society along socialist lines. ■



FINANCIAL APPEAL:

HELP US TO EXPAND OUR OFFICE!

Socialist Appeal

The current crisis of capitalism is so profoundly deep that the term 'crisis' has almost been worn out. Fresh political, social, and economic crises appear to be looming round the corner, with one arriving nearly every week. And this is in Britain, let alone the world situation!

The government is beset with scandals from Johnson's sordid affair, in part financed by the state itself, to the astonishingly open corruption involved in government contracts related to the pandemic.

The appalling murder of Sarah Everard and the subsequent police clampdown on vigils has revealed to millions the truly rotten and decrepit nature of the system we live under. This, and attempts to curtail democratic rights to protest have only provoked mass anger and demonstrations.

The consciousness of millions is transforming rapidly, and revolutionary implications flow from this.

Indeed, for many years Marxists were ridiculed for talking of revolution. We were told that revolutions were something of the past, and so too with the ideas of Marxism!

Yet we have seen insurrectionary movements in Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, Sudan, Hong Kong, and even France to name a few in recent years. This year has seen ongoing revolutionary struggles in Myanmar, India and Thailand.

The question is no longer if a revolution will emerge, this question has already been answered. The question now is when a revolutionary movement emerges, *will it succeed?*

As Trotsky put it in 1938 in the *Transitional Programme*: "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterised by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat."

As long as workers in Britain are led by the likes of 'Sir' Keir Starmer and Christina McAnea, the nightmare created by the capitalist system will continue. We cannot allow that to happen.

Build the forces of Marxism

We at Socialist Appeal are striving to build a genuine Marxist leadership for the British labour movement.

Our rapid growth in recent years is testament to the appetite for revolutionary

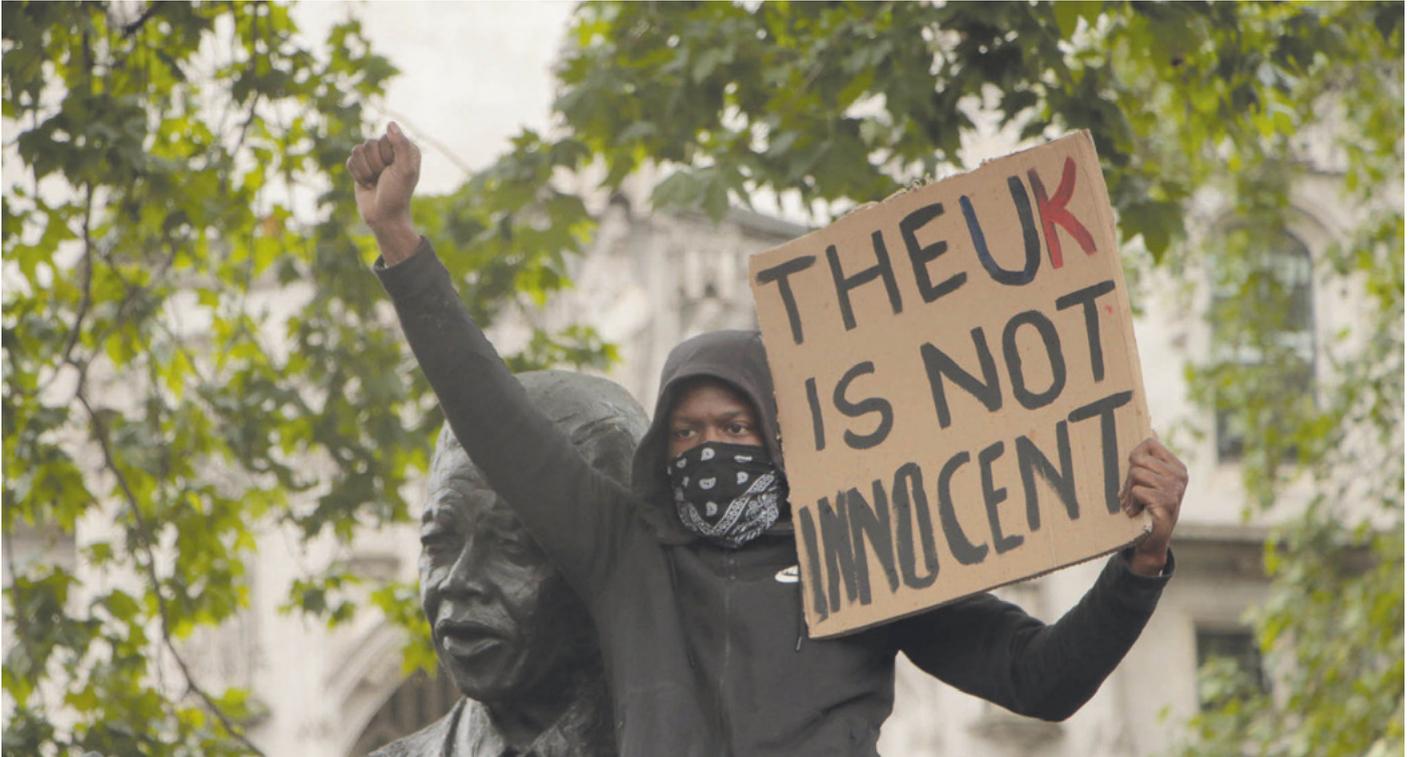
ideas amongst workers and youth. In fact, we have reached the point where we can no longer fit our expanded staff of full-timers into our current office!

We must move into a larger space, if we are to continue to grow and develop. Which is why we will start leasing a new office this Summer.

But in addition to the costs of the lease we will need to incur further costs relating to the office move itself, the purchase of new furniture, computers etc. We estimate that these added costs will come to as much as £10,000 and would therefore like to make this appeal for any support you can give us in raising this sum.

Any donation towards our target will be greatly received and go directly toward the building of the forces of Marxism in Britain. ■

**CLICK HERE
TO DONATE!**



RACIST RULING CLASS SAYS 'NO RACISM HERE'

Fiona Lali

Last week, the Tory government released its long-awaited report into racial inequalities in the UK. Scandalously, this report not only says that Britain *does not* suffer from institutional racism, but that the UK is actually a model for the rest of the world in terms of race relations.

The conclusions of the report, however, are not surprising. The report was produced by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, which was chaired by Dr Tony Sewell, CBE.

Sewell is a black careerist, who is on record as saying that there is no institutional racism in Britain. In a scandalous article in *Prospect* magazine in 2010, under the headline 'Master class in victimhood', he said: "Black boys used to fail at school because of racism, now they fail because they don't pay attention."

Divide and rule

The Sewell report reeks of arrogance, contempt, and defiance, reflecting the attitudes of the British ruling class.

The reason for this is very clear: the British establishment consciously promotes the very real racism that exists in the UK today. They whip up xenophobia and nationalism at every opportunity, in order to pit workers of different ethnic backgrounds against each other. Their method is clear: divide and rule.

The Sewell report notes the higher COVID death rate amongst BAME people,

Capitalism today - in Britain and internationally - relies on racism to divide workers against each other, in order to exploit workers of every ethnicity all the more effectively.

as well as the Grenfell tragedy and the Windrush scandal. And yet it still concludes that there is no institutional racism in the UK.

So farcical and insulting are the report and its conclusions, that even some of Boris Johnson's own team have distanced themselves from it, with Downing Street's race advisor Samuel Kasumu resigning in the wake of the report's publication.

And now it turns out that significant sections of the report - including its recommendations - were not written by its 12 'independent' commissioners, but allegedly by Number 10 directly.

UK not innocent

In handlings with the police; in medicine and mortality rates for black women; in education exclusion rates; in unemployment levels; and in income and savings: in all these cases we can see the disproportionate ways in which black people and other ethnic minorities are impoverished and oppressed within capitalist society.

Racism is irredeemably institutional. It continues to be actively and consciously promoted by the ruling class, because it serves a purpose: furthering their class interests and aims.

Capitalism today – in Britain and internationally – *relies on* racism to divide workers against each other, in order to exploit workers of every ethnicity all the more effectively.

This is more obvious today than ever, with the Tories whipping up 'culture wars' over racist statues, as a distraction from the accelerating slide into poverty for millions of people.

Zero-sum game

The report is a brazen continuation of this policy. It openly attempts to pit the 'white working class' against ethnic minorities.

It is a cynical attempt to appeal to sections of the working class in former industrial heartlands – communities that have been destroyed by successive Tory governments. So here we have a report

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into racial inequality in the UK which not only concludes that there is no structural problem, but which furthermore deliberately portrays poverty amongst white people as something that has been ignored *in favour* of ethnic minorities.

The report effectively puts forward a 'zero-sum game' argument, saying to a young white boy in Barnsley: part of the reason your school is underfunded is because too much attention has been given to young black boys in London.

The reality is that this poverty is the direct result of austerity; of Thatcher's attacks on the working class; and of the decimation of entire towns and communities under successive governments.

Labour flag waving

Unfortunately, the Labour leadership has tacitly bought into this same argument with its flag waving and patriotic appeals to voters in the former 'Red Wall' areas of the country. Instead of putting forward class-based solutions on the question of

housing, jobs, and public services – which would raise living standards for the whole of the working class, regardless of ethnicity – Keir Starmer and the Labour right wing have tried to outflank the Tories, pandering to their reactionary nationalism.

This has led the Starmer leadership to abandon the Black Lives Matter movement. And, at the same time, it has played right into the hands of the Tories, as they look to wage a distracting and divisive culture war.

Class and race

It is the Tories and their attacks that are responsible for poverty and worsening living conditions. And this is something that affects the entire working class, irrespective of the colour of skin.

There is no separate 'white working class' as opposed to ethnic minorities. There is one working class that is made up of different ethnicities. The white boy in Barnsley and the black boy in London have the same Tory government; they suffer from the same austerity.

Racism undeniably pushes black and other people of colour further and further

down. But white workers do not benefit from this. Rather, it is the capitalists who gain, using racism to force workers of different backgrounds into a race to the bottom in terms of wages and conditions.

Capitalism is racist

The solution to both institutional racism and to poverty amongst the 'white working class' is the same: It is class based – and it requires a united struggle by workers and youth to overthrow the capitalist system.

Rather than putting the issue of racism to bed, this report will no doubt provoke a backlash. If anything, the establishment's denial of institutional racism will only vindicate and embolden those who have come out onto the streets to protest against racism and oppression over the last year.

Labour and the trade unions must reject this report in its entirety. Instead, they should link up with the radicalised youth in the BLM movement, and unite all sections of the working class in opposition to the Tories and the capitalist system – a system based on racism, oppression, and the exploitation of all workers. ■

PIMLICO ACADEMY PROTEST: MILITANT ACTION PAYS

Mavi Atilgan

On Wednesday 31 March, hundreds of students at Pimlico College held a sit-down protest on school grounds.

The protest happened on the back of countless changes, revealing quite clearly the outlook of the school's leadership.

Recognition of the Black Lives Matter movement and Black History Month had been scrapped from the curriculum. On top of that, the Union Jack flag had been introduced to the hallways and outside the school.

Not only has teaching on oppression been removed, but a larger focus has been placed on the British monarchy.

Reactionary

Our education system is presented as simply a means

to help facilitate the growth of students to form their own opinions. But these actions show that education under capitalism is far from neutral. They show in no uncertain terms that the British education system stands in favour of the established order.

Part of the changes imposed by the school management included new uniform policies that directly targeted black and muslim students. These additional rules restricted hairstyles that "block the view of others", implying afros and natural black hair.

The rules also banned hijabs that are deemed to be "too colourful". A petition against these rules was swiftly started, and quickly reached over 1,000 signatures.

Breaking point

In response to all these reactionary changes, hundreds of students took action against the new measures, with a sit-down protest in the school grounds.

Students carried placards saying "Black Lives Matter".

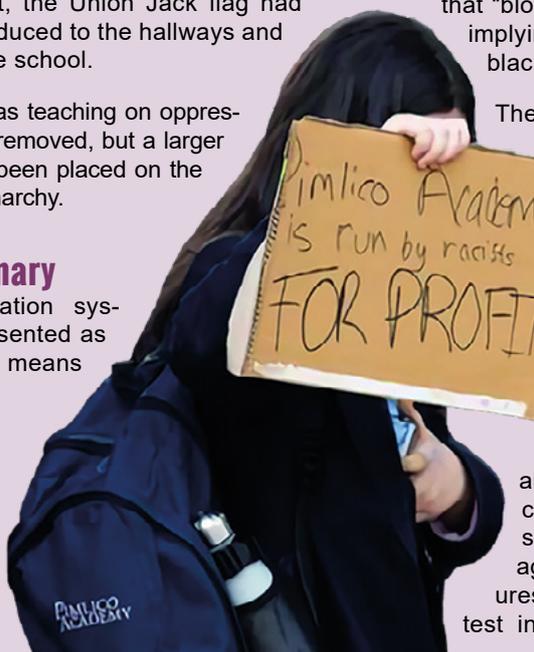
Graffiti was added to school walls and areas outside of the school grounds, that labelled the school as racist and called for the head teacher to be sacked. Slogans were featured such as 'Ain't no black in the union jack...' and 'Pimlico Academy run by racists... for profit'.

This protest demonstrates how politicised young people have become. It all goes to show that students are no longer willing to passively accept ideas which do not correspond to the reality of oppression and exploitation that they experience in their lives.

Fightback

The students at Pimlico College won their battle, with the college agreeing to all of their demands. The lesson here is that militancy pays.

However, this is not the end of the struggle against oppression. The establishment is frightened of what is to come. And so they should be! Students and workers must unite in militant action against all oppression and exploitation. Pimlico College students have shown the way forward.



RAPE CULTURE IN SCHOOLS

THE PRODUCT OF A SICK SYSTEM

Rishi Milward-Bose

Canterbury Marxists

From 'rape-lists', to 'body counts' and revenge-porn group-chats: revelations from the 'Everyone's Invited' website – which provides a platform for people to submit anonymous experiences of sexual abuse and violence within schools and colleges – makes for harrowing reading.

The website has received nearly 15,000 responses from students, helping bring to light the endemic rape culture within educational institutions across the UK – particularly acute in private schools.

Sick

One pupil at the independent school King's College, Wimbledon, reported how boys there have "a game during the summer about how many girls they could show their dicks to...it was some sort of sick competition".

Another student revealed: "You would be entirely correct in saying St Paul's boys' school is integrally built upon the unadulterated wish for boys to show their sexual prowess through rape and assault. I recall their age old 'theme tune' sung at rugby games including the lyrics: 'I'm St. Paul's till I die...fuck her sleeping, fuck her dying, if she had wings I'd fuck her flying'."

Capitalism and sexism

It is hardly surprising, however, that private schools have found themselves at the centre of this storm. At their core, private schools are a means for the ruling class to perpetuate their rule, by training up the next generation of the capitalist establishment.

As the children of the rich and powerful, boys at these schools are brought up to believe they are born to rule. From observing their parents, they are raised to believe they can act with impunity. On top of this, they are fed a curriculum that most closely reflects the outlook and interests of the ruling class, with pervasive sexist and racist ideas.

Under capitalism, women are treated as a secondary, exploitable labour force – the first to be sacked in the time of crisis; and relied upon to carry out the bulk of domestic labour in the home.



Enormous barriers – such as a lack of affordable childcare – stand in the way of women entering the workforce on the same terms as men, as well as in other fields of life, such as politics, culture, sport, etc.

On top of this, capitalism promotes sexism through the objectification and commodification of women's bodies, for the sake of the bosses' profit. This occurs through the capitalist media and through advertising, as well as the porn industry.

All of this is actively fed and fuelled by the ruling class, in order to divide the working class, making both women and men more vulnerable to the exploitation of the capitalists.

In effect, women are relegated to the position of second-class citizens: degraded, objectified, oppressed, and exploited. And this creates the fertile ground upon which sexist ideas – and sexual violence – flourish within wider society.

Elite

This lack of respect for women's autonomy and freedom begins at school, but carries on all the way to the top of the establishment.

For example, we see comments from Prime Minister Boris Johnson about how he would deal with a female colleague by "patting her on the bottom and sending her on her way"; or from Tory candidate Nick Conrad, who claimed that, in order to avoid being raped, women should "keep their knickers on".

Such horrific remarks would not find themselves out of place within the allegations on Everyone's Invited.

Tackle the roots

It is important for schools to teach pupils the importance of consent and respect. But this will do little to mitigate sexism in a system that thrives off the oppression of women.

A few petty reforms have been proposed by the establishment in an attempt to create the pretence of action. But Ofsted investigations into private schools will have little-to-no impact on the issue.

At the end of the day, these reforms present schools as isolated institutions where sexist culture can be 'fixed' internally. They fail to recognise that the schools – and the whole education system – are a reflection of wider society, shaped by capitalism and the interests of the ruling class.

Revolution and liberation

Marxists will fight for any real improvement in the lives of working women. But ultimately, the only way to fully tackle the question of sexism and women's oppression is by overthrowing the system that breeds this sexism and oppression.

Women will never be viewed as equals within a society built upon inequality and injustice. Neither women nor men will ever have control over their lives and bodies within an economy based on exploitation, profit, and competition, and commodification. And we will never rid the world of misogyny, as long as the capitalist class are in control, using sexism and bigotry to divide the working class.

In other words, to end sexism and all forms of oppression, we need to overthrow capitalism – we need a revolution. ■



Image: Montecruz Foto, flickr.com

SECTARIAN RIOTS

A BAD END TO A BAD PEACE

Irish Marxists

Over the past week, the North of Ireland has seen its worst rioting in years, ostensibly over the Northern Ireland Protocol signed by the Westminster government with the EU. The threat of loyalist violence has been in the air for months as tensions have ratcheted up since the Protocol came into effect in January.

Within weeks, loyalists issued death threats against port workers carrying out checks at the Irish sea border. At the start of March, the main loyalist paramilitary groups – the UVF, the UDA and the Red Hand Commando – took the step of announcing the withdrawal of their support for the Good Friday Agreement.

After all their threats, the loyalist paramilitaries have now bared their teeth. The immediate cause for the rioting was the refusal of the Public Prosecution Service to bring charges against senior Sinn Féin politicians for allegedly breaking COVID restrictions when attending the funeral of veteran Republican, Bobby Storey, on 30 June 2020.

The loyalists claimed that this was an instance of ‘two-tier policing’, with nationalists being treated with excessive leniency. The truth is that Catholics have been on the receiving end of heavy policing of COVID restrictions. Loyalist

paramilitaries meanwhile have been treated with regular indulgence.

Nonetheless, this has served as the spark for loyalist rioting that has now been ongoing for over a week. The numbers involved are small: groups of between a few dozen to a few hundred Protestant youths. They are disproportionately teenagers between the ages of 12 to 18.

One important detail – the mass text messaging and warnings to businesses – clearly show that this is no spontaneous affair. Behind the alienated, disillusioned youth, stand organised paramilitaries in one way or another.

On the sixth night of rioting (7 April) events took a serious turn. There were shocking scenes as a double-decker bus was pelted with petrol bombs and hijacked on Lanark Way, off the Shankill Road. The driver of the bus was assaulted and was fortunate to escape with his life.

The loyalist paramilitaries that triggered this violence have promised more – and a lot worse – to come.

Their central demand is for the Northern Ireland Protocol to be scrapped. They are blackmailing politicians in London, Dublin and Brussels that if they don’t get what they want, they have the power to create chaos and drag the region back to the ‘bad old days’.

British imperialism

The blame for the chaos on the streets of Ireland today must be placed squarely at the feet of British imperialism. For centuries, British imperialism has used sectarianism to divide the Irish working-class.

One hundred years ago it whipped up pogroms and partitioned Ireland in two to serve its short-term aim. It is still living with the legacy of that decision. Having unleashed the forces of sectarianism, those forces are now out of its control.

Into this toxic mix, the myopic representatives of British capitalism introduced the black and white choice of the Brexit referendum.

From the beginning though, Ireland was an impossible problem to solve on a capitalist basis. A capitalist EU cannot tolerate a hole in its border. However ‘light’ that border is, it must protect its internal market from its competitors. They therefore require *either* a border in the Irish Sea, *or* a border on the island of Ireland.

But whilst the British might try to reopen negotiations with the EU, and the government in Dublin might try to broker some concessions, the Brexit dilemma remains insoluble. Either Boris accepts the sea border and the NI Protocol; or he ditches it. But ditching it means souring

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relations with the EU and the United States, only to see the sea border replaced with a land border.

Boris is, of course, notoriously stupid and shortsighted. But because of the need for the British capitalists to maintain some access to the EU market, it is hard to imagine he will bend to the loyalists' demands. In which case, a head-on collision and further violence becomes the most likely outcome.

No future under capitalism

The only non-sectarian, working-class organisations in the North of Ireland that could *potentially* cut across the morass and put forward a clear class alternative are the trade unions.

We've seen a marvellous demonstration from the bus drivers of the solidarity and potential authority the organised working-class could muster in *both* communities.

The trade unions *could* offer a lead. They *could* call political strikes to isolate the loyalist rioters. They *could* organise non-sectarian self-defence to patrol neighbourhoods.

Yet the majority of the trade union leaders are explicitly *non-political*. They adopt an apolitical position mistakenly in the belief that only by removing politics from the trade union movement is it possible to cut across the sectarian divide.

But when workers are attacked by loyalist thugs, to whom do these 'apolitical' trade union leaders appeal? To 'the politicians'! They call for the representatives of 'political unionism' to cool things down. But this has a sectarian logic of its own.

The unionist politicians and loyalist paramilitary leaders have no right to speak for Protestant workers! It is only because there is no independent working-class voice, because the trade unions *do not* speak for workers, that right-wing sectarians can falsely claim to be their voice.

A revolutionary trade union leadership would call for political strike action against loyalist provocation and would proactively organise self-defence. The problem is precisely the lack of such leadership. In its absence the situation will remain volatile.

No one, other than a tiny fringe, wants to return to the violence of the past. But in 1968, the first of Ian Paisley's counter-demonstrations against the Civil Rights movement were relatively tiny. Yet they acted like a spark against a powder keg.

Class struggle

We are living through a critical moment in Ireland's history. The decay of British capitalism has revived the ghosts of the past and pushed Ireland once more to the brink.

The organised working class has the power to bring the violence to an end. We have seen a glimpse of this power with the bus drivers.

After the petrol bombing of a translink bus, hundreds of bus drivers surrounded Belfast city hall with buses and held a protest in which they vowed not to drive through disturbed neighbourhoods after a certain time at night.

At the moment the COVID-19 pandemic is holding back worker protests. But class anger is building up in both Britain and Ireland. Workers in the North, both Protestant and Catholic, face the same problems.

All this means is that when workers in the South or workers in Britain begin to move on the concrete issues that affect ordinary working class people, this will inevitably have an impact on workers in the North of Ireland.

These inevitable mobilisations will ignite the imagination of working-class youth in both Catholic and Protestant communities. Therein lies the perspective of united working-class action.

These inevitable mobilisations will ignite the imagination of working-class youth in both Catholic and Protestant communities. Therein lies the perspective of united working-class action.

However ominous the situation appears, and however hard it seems to bridge the sectarian divide in the North of Ireland – difficulties that can hardly be understated – we must bear in mind that events in Ireland are not sealed from events in the rest of the world. Class struggle is on the order of the day: in the South of Ireland, in Britain, and across the world.

The bulk of ordinary working-class people do not want a return to 'The Troubles'. But the fact that most people don't want it is no guarantee that it will not return. Capitalism in crisis creates the conditions for heightened tensions, that reactionary politicians will exploit to pit worker against worker.

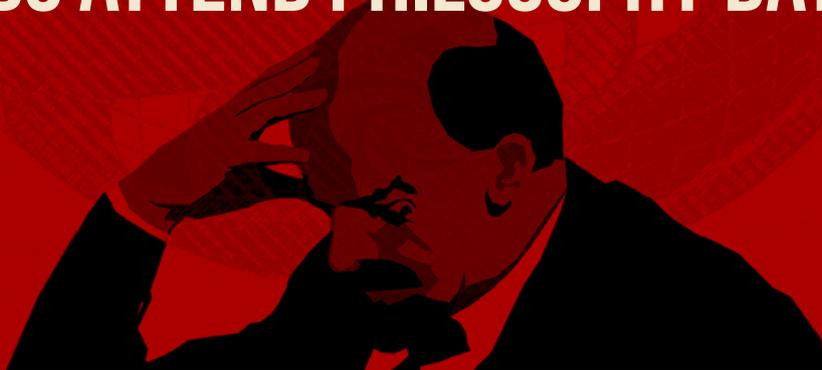
It is the duty of Marxists in the North of Ireland to explain why all this is happening, and why it is happening now. They must warn the workers of where all this could lead. But they must also offer an alternative perspective – one of united working-class struggle against the very system that spawned the sectarian monster: capitalism and imperialism.

According to the artwork on the Lanark Way 'peace wall': "There was never a good war or a bad peace." We have to disagree on two counts. There is a 'bad peace'. We are living through it. And there is a 'good war': the class war to put an end to the capitalist system, the source of misery, poverty and sectarianism. ■



IDEAS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

HUNDREDS ATTEND PHILOSOPHY DAY SCHOOL



Socialist Appeal

On 10 April, Socialist Appeal and the International Marxist Tendency (IMT) held an amazing day school to discuss the revolutionary philosophy of Marxism. Over 350 people participated from all over the world, joining us throughout the day on Zoom, as well as on Facebook and YouTube live-streams.

The day was split into three sessions, covering key aspects and debates within philosophy.

The first session featured an introduction by Alan Woods on the subject of *Materialism and Knowledge*. Alan highlighted how modern bourgeois philosophy reflects the overall decline of the capitalist system. Intellectuals and academics today are unable to offer progress, insight, or understanding; instead, they only promote idealism and irrationality.

Alan's talk also dealt with how we can come to know about the world; how we can really understand it through a dialectical materialist approach – as a vital step towards transforming it.

Comrades developed these points further in the discussion, linking the question of materialist philosophy to the struggles against oppression, and also to the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

Is progress possible?

The next session was introduced by Hamid Alizadeh, editor of marxist.com, who dealt with the topic of *Marxism vs Postmodernism*.

In particular, Hamid provided a response to postmodernism's dismissal of historical progress, and the reactionary implications that flow from this. For example, as Hamid explained, postmodernism represents a petit-bourgeois

class perspective, which romanticises pre-capitalist societies and economic backwardness.

Genuine revolutionaries cannot capitulate even an inch to the postmodern ideas that are pushed in the universities. Nor should we succumb to calls for an eclectic mix of theories, which only serves to create confusion and blunt the revolutionary edge of Marxist philosophy.

Contributions in the discussion really cemented why a consistent Marxist outlook will be our greatest tool in genuinely understanding – and fighting against – oppression and class society.

Nihilism vs revolutionary optimism

The day ended with an inspirational talk by Daniel Morley on the question of *Is Marxism fatalistic?*

Daniel's lead off was a response to an oft-cited caricature of Marxism, which asserts that historical materialism affords no free will or agency; and that Marxists simply believe socialism is inevitable, or is simply a matter of time.

However, Daniel highlighted that genuine Marxism is in fact the only philosophy that enables us to consciously intervene in history in order to change it.

In the discussion, comrades further emphasised how a fatalistic or mechanical outlook on historical events has nothing in common with the philosophy of Marxism, which is based on dialectical materialism. Rather, such a perspective breeds passivity and nihilism in the face of capitalist crisis.

Guide to action

Every day, a mountain of dirt is poured on the name of Marxism within academia, within the labour movement, and within society as a whole.

By contrast, this philosophy day school really proved how relevant and how essential Marxist ideas are. A revolutionary outlook is paramount in order to meet the challenges posed in these revolutionary times. As Lenin famously remarked: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."

The philosophy day school underlined how the IMT takes a serious approach to Marxist theory and education – not as an academic pursuit, but to arm us with the necessary tools to wage a revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

It is vital that we preserve and uphold the best traditions of Marxism in the face of the slander and distortions thrown at our movement. The ideas of Marxism are the only truly progressive and revolutionary ones; the only theory that can explain the world, in order to change it.

Marxist philosophy is a key weapon in the class struggle. It is a guide to action.

As revolutionary movements continue to erupt across the world, only an organisation steeled in these ideas, and embedded within the working class, will be able to lead the fight to abolish capitalism once and for all, and establish socialism internationally.

This is what we – comrades of Socialist Appeal and the IMT – are preparing for and building towards. We urge you to join us in this task. ■

**CLICK HERE
TO CATCH UP ON
THE TALKS!**



STARMER AND THE RIGHT WING LEADING THE LABOUR PARTY 'OVER A CLIFF'

Rob Sewell

Labour is heading for the rocks in the upcoming elections on 6 May. Amongst the potential defeats facing the party is the Hartlepool parliamentary by-election, which looks like it could be won by the Tories.

As a result, criticisms of Starmer's leadership – now a year old – are surfacing everywhere.

Warning signs

Tensions have arisen not only in the Labour Party, where many members are refusing to canvass for right-wing candidates, but also in the trade unions.

Len McCluskey has criticised the Labour leader for his lacklustre performance. The Unite general secretary asserted that Starmer was currently heading for "the dustbin of history".

Elsewhere, the CWU (Communication Workers' Union) recently commissioned and published a poll of voters in Hartlepool.

This survey showed widespread support for left-wing policies in the constituency. Nevertheless, it also indicated that the Tories were on course to take the seat, with an estimated 49% for the Conservatives and 42% for Labour.

If these predictions come true, it would be the first time in 60 years that Labour would not hold the Hartlepool seat.

These foreboding forecasts led Dave Ward, the CWU general secretary, to criticise Starmer's leadership for being "far too timid". This is a gross understatement.

Of course, the right wing of the Labour Party has reacted with fury, accusing the left-wing CWU of "betrayal".

"It's mind-boggling that one of the trade unions represented on Labour's NEC would work hand in hand with the Murdoch press to undermine the Labour party during a crucial set of elections," a senior Labour source said.

"Unfortunately, there are some factional figures on the hard left who seem intent on wrecking the party," the same source continued, "even if that means cosyng up to the Conservatives."

What a damned cheek from these right-wingers! They gleefully stabbed Corbyn in the back at every turn. Everyday, they worked to wreck the party. It was they who "worked hand in hand" with the Tory press and the establishment, in order to slander the left.

Truth hurts

Once elected as Labour leader, Starmer boasted that the party was now under "new management". He immediately acted by kicking the lefts out of the shadow cabinet.

His initial promises of 'unity' were a sham, only put forward to win the leadership under false pretences.

Now, however, the right-wing are screaming blue murder, as the left dares to challenge their pathetic record.

Ben Bradshaw, Labour MP for Exeter, said the poll was "helping Boris Johnson and the Conservatives" in an "extremely difficult" by-election. Another Labour insider said some MPs were "frothing at the mouth".

The truth clearly hurts. The CWU poll only reveals the real disillusionment with Labour under Starmer – something that the right-wing cannot stomach. The right's anger was correctly dismissed by the CWU leaders as a "piss-take from the Labour right".

"Our position," asserted a CWU spokesperson, "is that we are heading over a cliff here."

This is not some criticism from people "sitting in comfortable offices", as the notorious right-winger Bradshaw asserts. Rather, this reflects the real mood amongst hundreds of thousands of Labour members and activists. It is the feeling of voters.

Time for change

Starmer's attempt to portray the Labour Party as a party of business (see next article) will further alienate its traditional working class supporters. It is an attempt to return to Blairism.

The party's right wing are not representatives of the working class, but of capitalism. They are part of the establishment. We must seek to put an end to this disaster. It is time to show Starmer the door; to place him in the dustbin of history, together with the rest of the right-wing leadership.

It is time for the trade unions to flex their muscles and back the left-wing membership. It is time for a radical change; for a change of leadership and direction.

We need a real socialist leadership in the Labour Party – one that will champion the interests of the working class, and that will fight for socialist policies. Only in this way can we prevent the meltdown, and mobilise workers and youth to kick out this rotten Tory government. ■

PATRIOTISM AND PRO-BUSINESS POLICIES WILL NOT HELP THE LABOUR PARTY

Adam Booth,

Hackney North and

Stoke Newington CLP

Now a year into the job, and with the May elections approaching, things are not looking so good for Labour leader Keir Starmer.

On the one side, Boris Johnson and the Tories are enjoying a 'vaccine bounce' in the polls. On the other, it seems that voters are not as enamoured with Starmer's strategy of so-called 'constructive opposition' (i.e. no opposition) as he had initially hoped.

Rightward turn

According to recent polls, Starmer's personal approval ratings are now in negative territory. Only last summer, by contrast, the Labour leader had a net rating of +31% (percentage satisfied minus percentage dissatisfied).

Keen to demonstrate that the Labour Party is under 'new management', the Starmer leadership has jettisoned the left-wing, class-based policies brought in under Corbyn. In their place is patriotic flag-waving, appeals to big business, and a pathetic cocktail of the two in the form of the 'British Recovery Bond'.

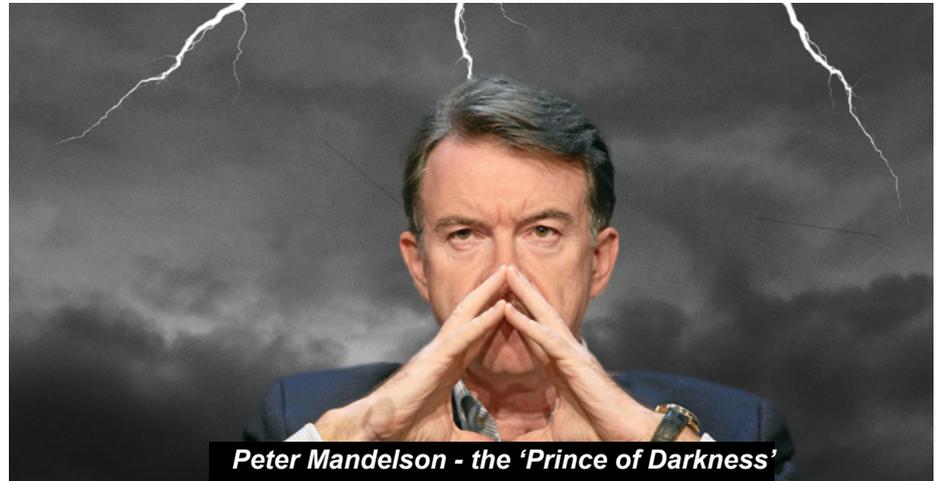
This approach has not gone down well with the party's left-wing rank and file. The wider public, meanwhile, are also not happy with the rightward direction that Starmer is taking Labour.

"One in five Labour voters from 2019 say they are unfavourable towards Starmer and one in five think he is going to move the party in the wrong direction," stated Keiran Pedley, the director of politics at surveying firm Ipsos Mori. "They don't think he is opposing the government strongly enough."

Doubling down

Labour MPs on both wings of the party are unhappy. While the left is looking to launch a fightback against the attacks on activists and party democracy, right-wingers are also lurking in shadows, looking to make their move.

Rumours are circulating of a leadership challenge from the right – all the more likely if Labour performs badly in the upcoming elections, particularly in the Hartlepool by-election. Notorious names such as Yvette Cooper and Rachel



Starmer is doubling down. Egged on by Blairite relics - such as the 'Prince of Darkness' Lord Mandelson - the Labour leader is said to be considering a reshuffle, to push the shadow cabinet even further to the right.

Reeves have been mentioned as potential replacements for the party's top role.

Nevertheless, in the face of this crisis, Starmer is doubling down. For example, egged on by Blairite relics – such as the 'Prince of Darkness' Lord Mandelson – the Labour leader is said to be considering a reshuffle, to push the shadow cabinet even further to the right.

Again, renowned right-winger Reeves has been suggested as a possible candidate for the shadow chancellor position, replacing the almost-invisible Annaliese Dodds.

Loud and clear

The message is being shouted loud and clear: Labour under Starmer stands on the side of big business.

And just in case anyone was in any doubt, Labour MPs who might have once held socialist sentiments are being forced to publically repent for their former sins.

Recently, for example, Leeds North West MP Alex Sobel was pressured into apologising for comments made years earlier, when he described climate-destroying corporations as "the enemy".

"Alex Sobel knows what he said was wrong," affirmed Starmer in response. "He has apologised. He's apologised to me. The Labour Party, under my leadership, is

very clearly pro-business...And Alex Sobel understands that."

"Under my leadership, I've been very, very clear that the Labour Party is pro-business," Starmer stressed. "We're more than pro-business. We want a partnership with business."

Meanwhile, the leadership's garish displays of patriotism continue unabated, with 'Sir' Keir Starmer joining the nauseating 'Queen and Country' chorus surrounding the death of Prince Philip.

Struggle for socialism

All of this noise and nonsense is paving the way for electoral disaster. Neither pandering to nationalism, nor grovelling before the establishment and big business will help Labour's chances.

Only by taking the fight to the Tories, with a mass campaign for bold socialist policies, can the party turn things around.

But Starmer has made his position clear. He and the rest of the right-wing are agents of the ruling class, looking to make Labour a 'safe pair of hands' for British capitalism and imperialism.

This is why we must organise and mobilise to remove these Tory infiltrators and saboteurs: to reclaim the party as a weapon for workers and youth in the struggle for socialism. ■



WHAT WE SAY | TIME FOR THE MONARCHY TO PASS AWAY ... Fight for a socialist republic!

Editorial

On Friday 9 April, Buckingham Palace announced the death of his Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, at the age of 99. The establishment eulogies have not stopped since.

Boris Johnson, speaking from Downing Street, said that the Duke had “helped to steer the Royal Family and the monarchy, so that it remains an institution indisputably vital to the balance and happiness of our national life.”

The PM was followed by the grovelling Labour leader, Sir Keir Starmer, who said: “The United Kingdom has lost an extraordinary public servant in Prince Philip, who dedicated his life to our country.”

The BBC – a mouthpiece for the British establishment – has bombarded readers, listeners, and viewers with stories about what a “tough life” Philip led as a standard bearer for his country.

Such praise is to be expected from supporters of the establishment and the British monarchy, which is a vital component in propping up the existing order.

Nevertheless, the sheer scale of this nauseating chorus has been too much for most ordinary people to stomach. For example, as a result of its hysterical

propaganda and hyperbolic coverage – with all normal television and radio schedules suspended on the day of Philip’s death – the BBC received a record-breaking 100,000 complaints.

This is an indication of the real mood in society: not one of reverence towards the rotten institution of the monarchy, but of revulsion and disgust.

Reserve of reaction

The Duke’s death has been used to promote and celebrate British nationalism, flag-waving, and the institutions of pomp and privilege; to promote the Royal Family as an essential cornerstone of the ‘British way of life’.

The monarchy, however, is not some holy-of-holies. It is a relic that has been left over from the days of feudalism, representing the interests of the powerful landowning classes. Abolished by the English Revolution in the 17th century, the monarchy was restored and became a useful tool for the new merchant and bourgeois class.

In modern times, the British monarchy was given a ‘make-over’ and anointed with a mystical gloss. Standing above politics, it was to become a key component in the preservation of capitalism. This was revealed by Walter Bagehot in his writings on the Constitution.

Millions of pounds of public funds are spent on the upkeep of the Royal Family. This is not to maintain the monarchy as a tourist attraction, but for far more serious reasons.

The armed forces swear allegiance, not to Parliament, but to the monarch. The Prime Minister is appointed by the monarch, as head of her government. The Queen (or King) has the power to appoint and dismiss governments and dissolve Parliament.

The monarch has enormous reserve powers under the British constitution, which is unwritten. These powers are only to be used in times of great crisis, when the capitalist system is under threat.

These would be deployed by the establishment to block a left Labour government, for example, for the sake of ‘national security’ – i.e. if it threatened their class interests.

Scandal and sleaze

For the monarchy to play such a role in the future, its reputation as standing above politics – of neutrality – must be preserved. Part of this is to build up the mystery surrounding the Royal Family, who must not be regarded as ordinary

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mortals. They are the ‘untouchables’. Sadly for them, the scandals that have rocked the Royal Family over the past decades have tarnished their reputation. The recent spat with Harry and Meghan came as a bitter blow. It revealed the inner workings of the monarchy, including their reactionary attitudes.

Ditto with the scandal surrounding Prince Andrew, and his links to alleged paedophile pimp Jeffery Epstein.

Commenting on the recent Oprah interview with Harry and Meghan, the editor of the *Daily Mail* wrote: “She [Meghan] and Harry stripped away what few vestiges of mystery the monarchy had left, reducing it to the dimensions of a tawdry soap opera, while making the Palace and its advisers seem malevolent and destructive.”

The Mail editor went on: “This interview has opened up much more than

just an irreparable schism with the Royal Family. It presents a clear and present danger for the future of the monarchy.” (*Daily Mail*, 9/3/21)

The death of the Duke of Edinburgh has been used by the establishment to eulogise the monarchy and white-wash this feudal institution.

This is ironic, given Prince Philip’s notoriety for racist jokes and comments. This was well-rehearsed bigotry – nevertheless excused by fawning journalists as mere ‘gaffes’, to be brushed under the carpet.

Is it therefore surprising that racism surfaced in the Royal household over Meghan’s baby?

Abolish the monarchy!

Unlike the ‘patriotic’ Labour leader, Keir Starmer, socialists should argue for the complete abolition of the monarchy, which is a feudal relic and a dangerous reserve weapon of the ruling class.

Apparently, Starmer was named after Keir Hardie, the founder of the Labour Party, who was no Royalist.

As a member of Parliament, in 1893, Hardie opposed the address to the throne, instead moving an amendment demanding that the government pay attention to the condition of the unemployed.

By contrast, we now have the sickening spectacle of ‘Sir’ Starmer – a knight of the realm – bowing down before the capitalist establishment, with the Labour Party suspending election campaigning “out of respect” for the monarchy.

If the party was worth its salt, it would stand by the principles of Keir Hardie in this matter, and call for the abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords, and all the other feudal relics of the British establishment.

We say: Down with the monarchy! Down with the capitalist system! For a socialist society, run in the interests of the majority, not these privileged parasites! ■

CAMERON, THE CONSERVATIVES, AND CORRUPTION

Editorial

Shortly before David Cameron became prime minister, he predicted that big business lobbying was “the next big scandal waiting to happen”.

Cameron, now an ex-PM and MP, did not imagine that he would be at the heart of one such scandal. This is – as he has been at pains to stress – since he didn’t break any official rules!

Cameron is now so astonished over the furore that has erupted around his lobbying for the finance firm Greensill Capital, that he has come out saying that there are “lessons” to be learnt. No doubt the chief lesson that Cameron has learnt is: don’t get caught!

A mass of evidence has come out showing how Cameron repeatedly pushed his old pal Chancellor Sunak last year to find a way of helping Greensill Capital, which was then deep in the mire.

Cameron sent a river of text messages to all manner of top and not-so-top civil servants, in a clear attempt to use his former position to help bend the rules.

Of course, the fact that Cameron had extensive shares in Greensill Capital must have been playing heavily on his mind.

Greensill Capital and its boss, Rex Greensill, have long held ties with Cameron. When Cameron was PM, Rex was

appointed as a ‘senior adviser’, giving him huge access to Whitehall.

After Cameron left office, he in turn became a ‘senior adviser’ to Greensill Capital, working a massive 25 days a year. In return, he was given stock options in the company.

This revolving door soon produced results. At a private drink with health secretary Matt Hancock in 2019, Cameron angled for government largesse to be dropped into the pockets of Greensill Capital. Sure enough, a huge NHS contract worth £1.26 billion came its way.

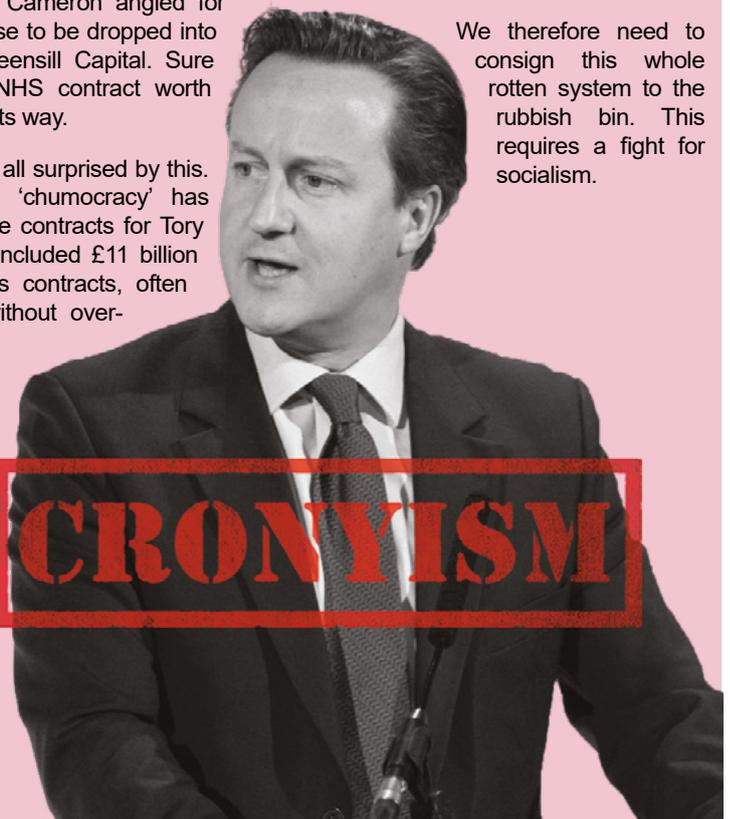
We shouldn’t be at all surprised by this. The government’s ‘chumocracy’ has provided huge state contracts for Tory cronies. This has included £11 billion just on coronavirus contracts, often pushed through without oversight or tendering.

Boris Johnson now hopes to defuse the Cameron scandal by setting up an inquiry. But the ‘independent review’ will have no powers of sanction, and is only mandated to investigate ‘what happened’.

In reality, this so-called inquiry is just a sham, designed to kick the whole thing into the proverbial long grass.

Ultimately, the system cannot be reformed or cleaned up. Any new measures will just be side-stepped, as they always have been in the past. Cameron will get off with a slap on the wrist. The revolving door will continue to turn.

We therefore need to consign this whole rotten system to the rubbish bin. This requires a fight for socialism.



MARXISM VERSUS IDENTITY POLITICS



THE POLITICS OF DIVISION

Ylva Vinberg

When we look around the world today, we see police violence against black people in the United States, border controls and live ammunition being fired at refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean, and an epidemic of violent murders of women, or 'femicides', in Mexico.

This is the system we live under. A world in which people face harassment, violence and degradation on account of their gender, sexuality, the colour of their skin, their ethnicity or religion.

Despite all the talk about 'gender equality' from world leaders, the situation for women and girls is getting worse. It is hailed as a great leap forward when a woman becomes prime minister, or a Hollywood celebrity gives a speech at the Oscars extolling the virtues of gender equality. In the real world however, the majority of women are condemned to a lifetime of poverty and discrimination.

60% of the world's chronically hungry are women and girls. Women make up more than two-thirds of the world's 796 million illiterate people. 50,000 women are killed each year by a member of their own family.

How do we struggle against such oppression? For Marxists this struggle is

connected to the fight against capitalism, as we recognise that *all* oppression is ultimately rooted in class society.

Divide and rule

Oppression under capitalism serves a useful purpose for the ruling class. It divides the working class and the poor.

By fomenting sexism, racism, homophobia and other reactionary ideas, capitalists and politicians pit different sectors of the masses against each other, such that workers see *each other* as the enemy instead of the capitalists and the capitalist system itself.

Reactionary politicians like Trump, Bolsonaro and Johnson, have tried to rally the most politically backward layers of the masses against trans people; a woman's right to abortion; immigrants, and so on. This serves to keep workers from uniting in the struggle against capitalism.

Oppression is also very profitable. Immigrants and other oppressed layers of the working class are often paid less, in turn putting pressure on the more well-paid layers of the working class to lower *their* wages and accept reduced working conditions or else face being replaced. By lowering wages for one portion of the working class, the capitalists can therefore lower the wages of all workers.

Class struggle

As such, Marxists have always argued that the real way to fight oppression is through class unity. The more united the working class, the harder it is to use oppression to divide workers.

The more support a movement against oppression has among broad layers of workers, and the more the struggle falls under working class leadership, the greater the threat such a movement poses to the system itself and the more likely we are to win concessions. The importance of a class-approach comes down to the unique position of the working class in capitalist production.

Capitalism is based on the exploitation of workers for profit. This means that workers can hit capitalists where it hurts. Strikes that stop production cause the capitalists to lose profits. Such a power is possessed by no other layer of society.

It's no accident that the biggest gains made for women were a product of the class struggle. For instance, the right of women to vote was won in Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Sweden and a host of other countries in the revolutionary period of 1917-1920. In the same period the franchise was extended in Britain, to all men and middle class women over the age of

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30. Although these reforms were limited, they were only granted at all because the ruling class was terrified that unless they made concessions, revolution would overthrow the entire capitalist system. They were nervous of the spread of the Russian revolution, where giant strides had been made in achieving equality between the sexes.

The struggle against oppression is part and parcel of the struggle against capitalism. After all, a socialist revolution *cannot* succeed unless workers unite.

It is precisely in periods of great class battles, and especially during revolutions, that workers feel most immediately the need for unity. And it is during revolutions that workers begin - on a mass scale - to question everything society has tried to teach them.

During the 2011 revolution in Egypt, women who participated said that at the height of the revolution, women could spend an entire night outside in Cairo's Tahrir Square without fearing harassment. As one female participant explained: "No one sees you as a woman here; no one sees you as a man. We are all united in our desire for democracy and freedom."

The majority of workers in the world are women, or else part of an oppressed group. As such, the majority of people suffer a double oppression as members of an oppressed group and as workers. When workers move to change society they come forward with all their troubles, and struggle for complete liberation from *all* exploitation and oppression.

We have seen this during the last decade: in the Black Lives Matter movement; in the mass movement against Modi's citizenship law aimed against Muslims in India; and in the 5.3 million workers - both men and women - who came out during the women's strike in Spain in 2018.

We have seen such massive movements against oppression around the world in recent times, because we are living in a period of a deep capitalist crisis that has provoked class struggle and revolutions.

Identity politics

It is not uncommon for feminists and advocates of various brands of identity politics, to claim that Marxists are uninterested in the struggle against oppression. It is often claimed that we are only waiting for the revolution and are therefore uninterested in reforms that benefit the oppressed.

However, it is *only* in the day-to-day struggle for improved living conditions, and against injustice and counter-reforms, that workers can learn how to struggle against capitalism.



The struggle against oppression is part and parcel of the struggle against capitalism. After all, a socialist revolution cannot succeed unless workers unite.

What Marxists do explain, however, is that you cannot simply reform away oppression. And that collaboration with the ruling class in the struggle against oppression will not take us forward by a single step.

The capitalists, no matter whether they are men or women, black or white, gay or straight – profit from oppression. Any attempts to collaborate with the ruling class or their political representatives will always end up with the latter derailing or attempting to derail the movement into something that's 'safe' from the point of view of their system or their profits.

As Marxists we have a clear understanding of how to fight oppression and how to abolish it. But the forces of Marxism are still a minority and we are too small to lead mass movements. As such, most of those who seek ways to fight oppression encounter the ideas of identity politics, including intersectionality, queer theory, or radical feminism.

Identity politics is based on the idea that all struggles against oppression have to be led by those directly suffering under that specific oppression. It is women who must lead the fight against patriarchy; it is trans people who must fight against transphobia; it is black people and people of colour who must lead the fight against racism, etc.

For identity politics, the struggles against different oppressions are separated, and different forms of oppression are understood as structures more or less distinct from capitalism. As such, women's oppression is regarded as being based on 'patriarchy', and is not necessarily seen as

rooted in class society. Racism meanwhile is caused by 'white privilege'.

Changing minds

But what is 'white privilege'? What is 'patriarchy'? The dominant understanding within identity politics explains oppression as a result of a series of unfortunate ideas or 'norms'.

The struggle against oppression therefore becomes, first and foremost, a struggle to convince people and society to give up oppressive ideas and behaviour. This perspective views society and the way the world operates as the consequence of the ideas, morals or norms people hold. This is an outlook known in philosophy as *idealism*.

Marxism takes the contrary stance. As philosophical *materialists* we understand that the ideas that people have, and the dominant ideas of society in particular, are shaped by our conditions and how society is built.

For example, the ideas of racism first arose to justify slavery and colonialism, and continue existing today to justify imperialist exploitation and racist discrimination.

Women's oppression arose alongside class society and private property, which developed in the field of work that men were primarily engaged in, i.e. agriculture. In order to maintain their private property and pass it on to their heirs, men forced monogamy upon women, so as to know which children were really their own. Thus, men came to dominate women, who were now confined to the home. It was on *this*

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basis that the control of women and their sexuality in the family arose.

If we want to rid society of all forms of oppression we must change society itself, not simply our *ideas* about society.

Under capitalism many women have gained greater economic independence from men as a result of being drawn into the working class and earning their own wage. But capitalism is still dependent on the family and the domestic labour of women in the household. Women are paid less, are more likely to work part time, and therefore remain economically dependent on men.

As long as that economic inequality exists, and as long as society rests on the current form of the family, then men will have power over women. With that follows violence, harassment and sexist stereotypes. These ideas are a reflection of the real world we live in.

Who benefits?

The ruling class spreads prejudice and hatred against oppressed minorities through the media, through the state, and throughout society, to maintain their economic and political power. Once more: it is not a matter of prejudice, but of the necessary dynamics of capitalism.

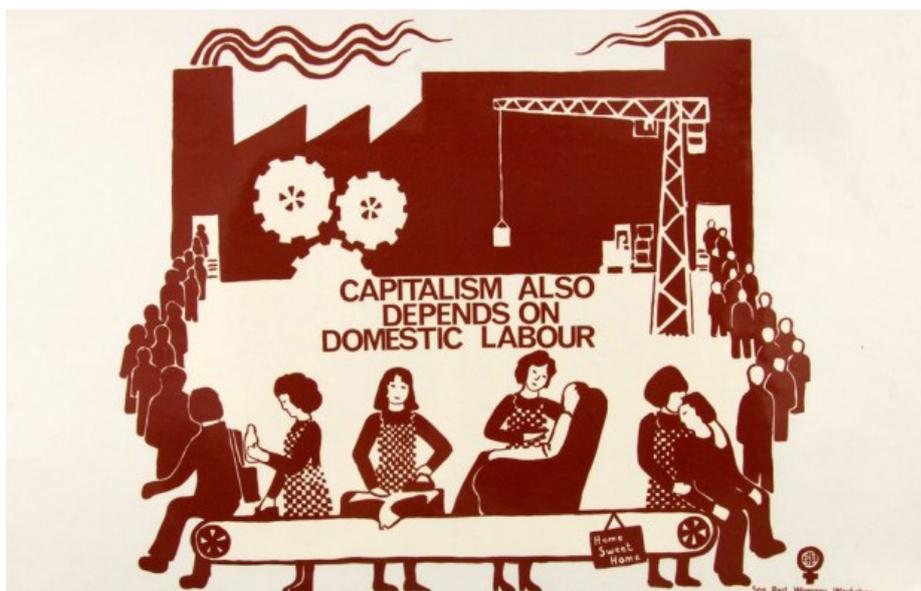
Identity politics on the contrary says that those who are to blame for the existence of oppression are those who are not oppressed in the same way: men are responsible for women's oppression and benefit from it; white people are responsible for racism and benefit from it; heterosexuals are to blame for homophobia, and so on.

As the intersectional academic Frances Kendall put it, "*Any of us who have race privilege, which all white people do, and therefore the power to put our prejudices into law, are racist by definition, because we benefit from a racist system*".

Feminist Heidi Hartman, says the same on women's oppression in her text *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (1979): "*men have a material interest in women's continued oppression*."

For them therefore, the fight against oppression is a struggle of women against men; people of colour against white people. Those who do not suffer from the same oppression are privileged and as they say, must "check their privileges", which means question your privileges. Their role in the struggle of the oppressed must be limited to that of passive 'allies' to those who must lead the struggle.

That means that the vast majority of oppressors in the world are actually the workers and poor! The real struggle becomes one of worker against worker,



If we want to rid society of all forms of oppression we must change society itself, not simply our ideas about society.

oppressed against oppressed. The way that identity politics puts the blame on the so-called 'privileged' workers actually mirrors the mechanisms of maintaining oppression under capitalism.

Capitalists want white workers to think that they benefit from racism, they want men to think that they benefit from women's oppression – they want workers to be pitted against each other and to believe that the other's loss is their gain. Identity politics says essentially the same thing.

The day-to-day advantages that some workers get from not being doubly oppressed is nothing compared to what they would gain if they united and threw off the system of capitalist exploitation entirely. It is not a struggle between different groups but a common struggle for common interests, of which the struggle against oppression forms a part.

If we take a closer look at the ideas of identity politics, we find the fingerprints of postmodernism everywhere. Both reject what postmodernists call 'grand narratives', that is, any attempt at understanding the objective world we live in. Instead we find the idea that I can only understand *my* oppression, *my* reality and no one else's.

As the prominent intersectional feminist, Patricia Hill Collins says, "*No one group has a clear angle of vision. No one group possesses the theory or methodology that allows it to discover the absolute 'truth'*".

The rise of identity politics in the labour movement was in no small part down to the

failures of the labour movement leaders themselves. There was a tendency in the labour movement to regard the issues of more oppressed workers as unimportant, as the leaders instead based themselves on the most well-paid workers with the mostly deeply ingrained illusions in reformism.

The inability of the labour movement to take a lead in the struggle against oppression, and the existence of Stalinism that claimed that it had achieved communism in the Soviet Union, despite the continued existence of women's oppression, state repression and inequality, led some to turn their backs on both Marxism and the labour movement. This gave an impulse to separatist organisations and a search for 'new ideas' – such as 'radical feminism'.

Reactionary ideas

If the fight against oppression is reduced to checking our privileges, and if we believe we just have to struggle against the *ideas* of sexism and racism, then we can be easily fooled into believing that real progress has been made simply because leading politicians or capitalists say they are feminists or anti-racists.

But politicians can say they are for gender equality whilst at the same time attacking working women's conditions.

Companies can take small initiatives, like the many companies that claimed to support Black Lives Matter, all the while exploiting their workers in the same

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manner as before and continuing to profit from oppression.

The idea that women have to be represented by other women is another idea from identity politics the ruling class knows how to profit from.

When a left-wing challenge is made by a man, it's not uncommon for the right-wing to present a candidate from an oppressed group as a smokescreen to hide their reactionary politics. Identity politics is used to disguise the politics they actually stand for or the class interests they represent.

In the Labour Party we have seen how perniciously the ideas of identity politics can be used by the right. The right-wing have used the slander of 'institutional antisemitism' to attack the left. But as identity politics asserts that only those suffering under oppression can define what that oppression is, the left are not permitted to answer these claims. To be accused is to be guilty.

The left in the Labour movement are very vulnerable against this sort of attack precisely because much of the left has also, lamentably, accepted the logic of identity politics. This is why many left-wingers, including Owen Jones, John McDonnell and others, have more or less accepted all those claims without question.

In Sweden, one party after another branded themselves as feminist since the 1990s, precisely in the period when the gains for women made in the post-war period began to be rolled back through cuts and privatisation.

Ebba Busch Thor – the leader of the Swedish Christian Democratic Party, calls herself a feminist despite being a conservative who would like to curtail the right to abortion! The Liberal Party of Sweden has a black female leader. And yet she has shifted the party to a more



Companies can take small initiatives, like the many companies that claimed to support Black Lives Matter, all the while exploiting their workers in the same manner as before and continuing to profit from oppression.

openly racist profile in order to bring it closer to the racist Sweden Democrats.

The Social Democratic government currently in power in Sweden, has claimed that it carries out a 'feminist foreign policy'. And yet they do not blush to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen. All of these politicians use labels and their identities as a way to distract from the policies that they carry out.

Identity politics is not, as those who advocate it would claim, a means to make sure that the struggle against oppression is made a top priority of political leaders. It is a façade these leaders use to cover what, at best, amounts to inaction; and in the worst case, cuts and austerity. This is true for the capitalists, the right-wing parties, and the labour movement leaders.

Knowledge of how to fight women's oppression is not something you are born with simply because you're born a woman. This knowledge has to be acquired.

As Marxists we are not fighting for a minority from an oppressed group to achieve a glistening career in the capitalist state. We don't fight for the oppressed to be 'represented' by a few individuals. Rather we fight for a communist society – with no state, no inequality and no oppression, where *everyone* runs society.

What we need is not to be equally represented by the capitalists that exploit us, or the politicians that uphold their system. What we need is to destroy the system that creates oppression.

What we need is not a myriad of different organisations for different oppressed groups all carrying out their separate struggles – but a united, mass movement of all the oppressed under the leadership of a revolutionary labour movement. ■





COVID CLAMPDOWNS

DEFEND CIVIL LIBERTIES!

Joe Attard

Governments the world over are exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic in order to curb civil liberties and clamp down on dissent.

Emergency legislation introduced to enforce lockdown rules and control the spread of the virus is also being used to restrict democratic rights. This is despite many governments failing to take other necessary measures to contain the pandemic.

A study by the Human Rights Watch variously accused 83 governments of having “physically assaulted journalists, bloggers, and protesters... arbitrarily banned or broken up protests... enacted vague laws and measures that criminalise spreading alleged misinformation or other coverage of COVID-19... [and used] counterterrorism and other measures pre-dating the pandemic, to arbitrarily arrest, detain, and prosecute critics.”

In short, the virus provides a convenient excuse to silence, disperse and disempower the masses in struggle.

Enforced silence

All over the world, thousands of people have been arrested and sanctioned with jail terms, fines and sackings for publicly criticising the official handling of the pandemic, as various states rush to save face.

Lockdown rules have also been exploited to cut across protest movements. In 2019, we saw a wave of revolutionary mass movements that swept the world from Hong Kong to Chile, Ecuador, Lebanon, Iraq and Algeria. In many of these countries, the coronavirus pandemic was

just the excuse the ruling class were looking for to brutally repress the movements.

In Hong Kong, authorities have used COVID-19 related restrictions to break up gatherings of anti-CCP demonstrators and fine participants. In Russia, Putin has used social distancing rules to criminalise protests following the arrest of oppositionist Alexey Navalny.

And emergency orders enacted in March by the Thai regime have been used to open criminal proceedings against dozens of political activists, with convictions carrying jail terms of up to two years. This is after the government crushed anti-monarchy protests late last year.

Finally, Chile has seen one of the longest continuous states of emergency in the world, which the military have used to help bury the legacy of the 2019 October insurrection.

This political repression under the pretext of controlling COVID-19 is a sign of weakness rather than of strength. While reactionary regimes hope to put a lid on seething cauldrons of discontent by cynically manipulating public health regulations, they will only ratchet up the pressure, preparing an even greater explosion down the line.

Pandemic of repression

Despite hypocritical condemnations by western bourgeois commentators, it is not only dictatorships in the so-called ‘Third World’ that have used COVID-19 as a fig leaf for stripping democratic freedoms.

All across the advanced capitalist countries, the story is the same. As the third wave of infections in Europe worsens, so do attacks on civil liberties, with governments using the opportunity to

massively expand their power.

In Britain, for example, COVID-19 restrictions were used by the Met Police to justify their brutal suppression of the vigil for Sarah Everard. And the Tory government is looking to further ramp up repression against protesters with new proposed legislation (see back page and p3 for further analysis and reports).

The Spanish government used a nationwide state of emergency (beginning in October) to impose a ban on demonstrations. This rule has been utilised very selectively, with the local government in Madrid banning Women’s Day protests on 8 March, but permitting a far-right demonstration of COVID-19 denialists on 23 January.

In France, meanwhile, Amnesty International condemned a “draconian crackdown on demonstrations” against racist police violence, Islamophobia, and the Global Security Bill, which aims to increase state surveillance and criminalise filming the police.

This all exposes the sham of ‘European democratic principles’, as well as the universal and immutable rule of law. These are all fictions intended to disguise the rule of the capitalists.

Masses defiant

But while degenerate bourgeois regimes use COVID-19 as a smokescreen to make grabs for additional state power, force through reactionary legislation, and suppress protest, the masses are not taking the situation lying down.

Despite COVID-19 undermining street demonstrations in general, significant

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protests have continued in all the above countries, despite the additional dangers presented by the pandemic and state brutality. In a few instances, the whip of reaction has even driven the masses forward.

To be clear, we – like most workers – accept the need for exceptional measures, including sanctions in some cases, to maintain lockdowns and prevent the spread of the virus.

The majority of working people understand these are drastic times and have already accepted great sacrifices to their daily freedoms in the name of fighting the pandemic.

However, capitalist governments are transparently using COVID-19 as a pretext to empower the repressive state

apparatus and silence legitimate protest, even when it respects social distancing rules. And whilst protesters are arrested, protest organisers are fined, and political opponents gagged, the real COVID criminals are getting off scot-free.

Where are the fines for companies that refuse to introduce social distancing in the workplace? Where are the prison sentences for bosses who fail to provide their workers with PPE? Or who demand that their employees turn up to work sick? Or – for that matter – for the politicians who have ground healthcare systems into the dust and created the room for this healthcare catastrophe?

We don't have to wonder as to why this is. The governments that are now carrying out an offensive against civil liberties are in the pockets of the rich. Defense of the bosses' profits is their first law.

The authoritarian manoeuvring we see today is an anticipation of even-stormier periods to come. Capitalist states are arming themselves with greater coercive powers and undermining the right to organise in advance of the explosive events and mass movements that lie ahead.

Without a working-class fightback, any curtailment of democratic rights introduced with the excuse of the pandemic will be made permanent and used to stifle the ability of workers and youth, and their organisations to organise and fight.

Therefore, it is critical that workers and their mass organisations fight to preserve their elementary democratic freedoms of speech, assembly and association. Both for today's struggles, and future battles. ■



MYANMAR

RISE UP TO OVERTHROW THE MILITARY JUNTA!

Fred Weston

The brutality of the Myanmar military junta is self-evident. Hundreds of protestors have been killed by the regime, with security forces shooting indiscriminately at unarmed civilians.

In spite of this utter barbarism, the people of Myanmar, workers and youth, are displaying tremendous courage and determination, coming out onto the streets in wave after wave of protest, risking their lives on a daily basis.

Brutality and resistance

Much of the regime's brutality has been at the country's various minorities, such

as the Karen people. The movement of the Karen minority has an armed wing, the Karen National Liberation Army. This is one of several ethnic armed organisations that have been fighting for greater autonomy from the central government. At present, the armed ethnic groups are the only military alternative to the Myanmar army and police. In fact, in the areas where they are strong, they have been using their armed units to defend the local people on protests.

Youth in the big cities, meanwhile, have started to draw the conclusion that 'peaceful protest' is going nowhere, and that what is required is an organised armed response to overthrow the

military junta. Some of them are turning to the armed ethnic groups seeking help and military training.

What we have here is a revolution taking place. There is no other way of describing it. The conclusion reached by the youth and workers – or at least the most advanced layers among them – that an armed response to the regime is required, is absolutely correct.

No class compromise

There is no room for compromise. Either the masses take decisive measures and go all the way to overthrow this regime

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or they will face bloody consequences and a terrible defeat.

The workers and youth, the peasants, the ethnic minorities, however, must place no trust in the bourgeois liberals, such as Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) and her National League for Democracy (NLD) party.

Today these liberals pretend to be your friends but tomorrow they will betray you. They do not defend the interests of the working masses of Myanmar. Their role is to preserve the property of the wealthy above any other concerns. That is the reason why they compromised with the military in the first place.

The working people of Myanmar can only count on their own forces. There is immense revolutionary potential within the courageous Myanmar masses, as can be seen every day on the streets. There have been powerful strikes, including general strikes. There have even been some cases of police officers deserting and fleeing rather than shoot their own people.

But for revolutionary potential to become a successful revolutionary taking of power by the masses, what is required is a mass workers' revolutionary party capable of bringing together all the forces that could successfully overthrow this regime. Such a party today would be issuing a call for revolutionary action, including armed action.

No illusions

We have to ask ourselves, however: What are the overall aims of the movement? Can it limit itself to simply removing the military and putting the NLD and ASSK back in office? If that is the case, then the movement can only expect to be betrayed again by the bourgeois liberals.

Any class compromise in this situation will end up with those at the bottom losing out. Yes, the liberals may succeed temporarily in removing the generals from power, but will they proceed to expropriate the army officers?

Will they root out all the officers and destroy completely the army apparatus as it now exists? When they were last in office they didn't do so. No, all you can expect from these people is another betrayal.

What is required is an independent organisation



Image: NinjaStrikers, Twitter

There is no room for compromise. Either the masses take decisive measures and go all the way to overthrow this regime or they will face bloody consequences and a terrible defeat.

of the Myanmar working-class. The workers already have trade unions. But unfortunately, these are mostly led by bureaucrats who are tied hand and foot to the NLD.

These so-called 'leaders' have issued appeals to the United Nations and even to the United States, sowing illusions that the 'western democracies' are going to save the situation. But beyond a few words of condemnation and some sanctions imposed on a few individuals at the top of the military regime, the United States is not going to send any military forces to Myanmar.

All-out strike

What is required is an all-out struggle to bring the military junta down with working-class methods. That means organising an all-out general strike.

There have been several general strikes that have revealed the huge support for such action among the mass of workers in Myanmar. But in a situation like this, partial strikes are not enough.

What is required is a total shut-down of the economy; an all-out extended general strike.

If such a general strike were organised in every corner of Myanmar, uniting all the working people and all the ethnic minorities, the army would not have enough forces of repression.

For such a general strike to be successful, it would also require the election of strike committees in every workplace, and neighbourhood committees. These bodies could take over the running of affairs locally.

In turn, these committees would require coordination up to a national committee, which would become the expression of workers' and peasants' power in the country.

This would need to have the clear aim of organising a mass armed uprising of the people. That is why an armed workers' self-defence force – a workers' militia – under the control of the strike committees is an urgent task before the movement.

If an all-out general strike, combined with a decisive call for an armed uprising, were to be organised, it would send a clear message also to the ranks of the police and army, pushing them to break ranks and turn against their own officers.

That would begin to tip the balance in favour of the movement and begin the process of the arming of the working class. This is the only way of ending the nightmare the Myanmar masses are facing today. ■



Pictured: ASSK

NFTs AND SPACs

THE INSANITY OF CASINO CAPITALISM

Nelson Wan

Capitalism is currently in the worst crisis in its history, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. And yet amidst the economic destruction, certain areas of the economy appear to be booming.

Stock market prices have reached new highs this year, as has Bitcoin, property, and other assets. In other words, whilst the real economy – and the working class – suffers, speculative investments have increased to a frenzied level.

This is symptomatic of a declining system; a system that lacks any logic or reason.

Global capitalism has only been able to keep its head above water thanks to trillions being pumped into the economy by governments and central banks. But instead of using this money to repair the damage, the capitalists are throwing cash at all manner of absurd speculative bubbles.

In recent months, there has been a new craze over so-called NFTs and SPACs, with investors clamoring for a slice of the pie amidst the promise of easy money.

Non-fungible tokens

An NFT is a unique 'non-fungible token' that is stored on the 'blockchain'. They are non-replicable, and have been created for assets such as images and digital artworks. They are intended to provide the buyer with a unique claim to ownership, like a certificate.

In March, an online collage by digital artist Beeple, authenticated with an NFT, was sold at Christie's for \$69.3M. Its sale has fuelled a frenzied demand for these tokens.

The problem is that when it comes to digital

assets like these, the creation of an NFT is an attempt to create artificial scarcity where there is none. Anyone can create an NFT for a digital asset, even if there's no actual asset behind it.

The supposed value of the NFT is in the idea that this unique digital certificate of ownership is valuable in its own right. But these assets can be freely and easily copied and distributed by anyone on the internet.

Unlike a physical asset, like a Picasso painting, each copy of a digital artwork is exactly the same as the original. These artworks are just data that can be duplicated with the click of a mouse.

NFTs are just another get-rich-quick scheme, driven to stratospheric heights by speculation and social media hype. There is no actual value in the NFTs themselves. The bubble around them is merely a reflection of the irrationality of the capitalist system.

SPACs

NFTs are just one of the insane bubbles being inflated right now. Investors are also piling huge amounts of money into 'SPACs' (Special Purpose Acquisition Companies) – referred to by investors as 'blank cheque' companies.

These companies, which possess no assets, only exist to raise capital via an initial public offering (i.e. selling shares to investors). The initiator of the SPAC promises investors that they will hunt around for a company to purchase. Investors can then choose to keep or sell this, in the hope of making a profit.

The mad rush for these worthless vehicles has reached dizzying proportions. And like NFTs, SPACs are luring investors with the promise of making handsome returns. However, the average SPAC loses 10% of its

value after buying up a company, with only a small minority making any money.

These scenes are reminiscent of every other speculation bubble that has gone before it: from the 17th century Dutch Tulip bubble, to the dot-com bubble at the turn of the millenium.

Fictitious capital

Karl Marx described this speculation – creating 'value' in the market without any real world equivalent – as the creation of 'fictitious capital'.

Exchanging shares on the stock market is not an actual exchange of commodities (i.e. of values). In fact, shares represent a claim to future values: profits that have not yet been made. The movements on the stock market, therefore, do not necessarily reflect the health of the real economy.

The frenzy over NFTs and SPACs is just another example of how the capitalists are behaving like gamblers at a casino. No value is being created; nothing productive is taking place.

Marx described how the ultimate fantasy of the capitalists is to make money from money, without bothering with the cumbersome process of investment in production itself.

Ultimately, this trend towards increasing speculation is a product of the organic crisis of capitalism – that is, the contradiction of overproduction and the lack of profitable markets globally.

The massive state stimulus that is propping up capitalism has left the global economy awash with cash. But with markets everywhere saturated, the result has been a huge casino of insane speculative bubbles.

The only solution is to nationalise the big banks and financial houses, without compensation, as part of a rational, democratic, socialist planned economy, in order to utilise this wealth for the good of all of society. ■



REVIEW:

THE MAURITANIAN

FROM ACADEMY AWARD™ WINNER
KEVIN MACDONALD

A GRAPHIC PICTURE OF US IMPERIALISM

Pat MacDonald

The BAFTA and Golden Globe nominated film 'The Mauritanian' tells the true story of Mohamedou Ould Slahi who was incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay for 14 years without charge.

Based on the best-selling book 'The Guantanamo Diary', the film is a graphic demonstration of the brutality of US imperialism and the reprisals it enacted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

The film begins in the joyous setting of a traditional Berber wedding during which Mohamedou is approached by Mauritanian military officials for questioning. His mother anxiously waits on the sidelines as the cheroot-smoking official invites him for a 'voluntary' interview with the Americans. The next time we see him he is locked away in a Guantanamo cell.

This begins a legal drama in which Nancy Hollander (played by Jodie Foster), a successful human rights lawyer, and Lt Colonel Stuart Couch (Benedict Cumberbatch), acting for the prosecution, both navigate the murky corridors of US military practice.

Couch is initially spurred on by a thirst for 'rough justice' after he hears that Mohamedou 'recruited' the man who hijacked flight 175 and flew it into the south tower of the World Trade Centre. He is purposefully selected to prosecute because a close family friend was first officer on board flight 175.

Hell

Hollander and her associate Teri Duncan regularly visit Mohamedou at Guantanamo throughout the film, which includes a surreal scene in the Guantanamo Gift Shop. The miles of tropical coastline are at odds with the hell the inmates face inside the facility walls.

So oppressive is the surveillance at 'Gitmo' that any sensitive information Mohamedou wants to pass on, has to be written down in letter form before being sent to a Federal Secure Facility in Virginia for Hollander and Duncan to read.

At the centre of the film is the hunt for the Guantanamo MFRs - Memorandums For the Record - which contain the true nature of Mohamedou's interrogation by Military Intelligence. The lawyers on both sides are constantly denied access to these until the CIA folds under pressure and releases the files.

Torture and duress

What follows are truly shocking scenes of duress and torture. The revelations are so startling that it causes Couch to resign from the prosecution team, as both he and Hollander are left stunned by the level of brutality.

"Where I am from we know not to trust the police, we know the law is corrupt and the government uses fear to control us" testifies Mohamedou when his case finally reaches court. He says that growing up he "and so many people in the world" believed that America was

different and that the law there was used to "protect people". He learns the hard way that this is not the reality.

No justice

What is shown to us is that under capitalism the state and its institutions are merely a weapon in the hands of one class over another.

Perhaps the most shocking aspect of the film is that, even after Mohamedou wins his case for unlawful detention, he was still kept in prison for a further seven years after the Obama/Biden administration appealed the verdict. This is the true face of the man who has just been elected President of the United States.

There are many courageous men and women in this film who fight tooth and nail for Mohamedou Slahi's eventual release in October 2016, and none more so than Mohamedou himself. He is shown to be a warm and intelligent man with an iron resolve.

But the real lesson of this film is not one of faith in 'Habeas Corpus' or even in human rights lawyers like Nancy Hollander. If anything the fact that he was in jail for 14 years without even a shred of evidence proves the opposite: that for working people of the world the criminal justice system is not a tool for their use.

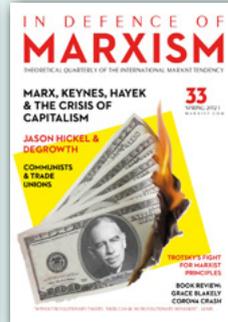
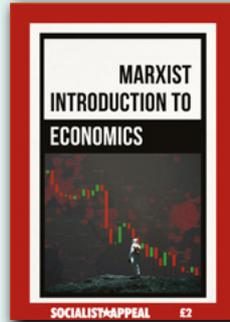
Great performances, particularly from Tahar Rahim and Jodie Foster, make this a very watchable film. It is a visceral watch and should act as a reminder about what happens when power is left in the hands of the capitalist state. ■

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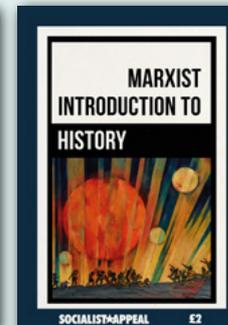
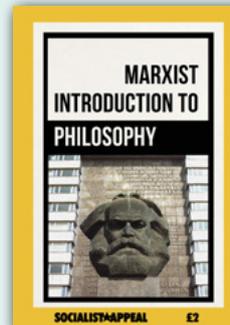


Issue 33 of the In Defence of Marxism magazine is out now.

It features articles on Keynesianism, theories of degrowth, the Anglo-Soviet committee/communists and the trade unions, Trotsky's struggle for Marxist theory in the US SWP and a book review of Grace Blakely's book on the Corona Crash.

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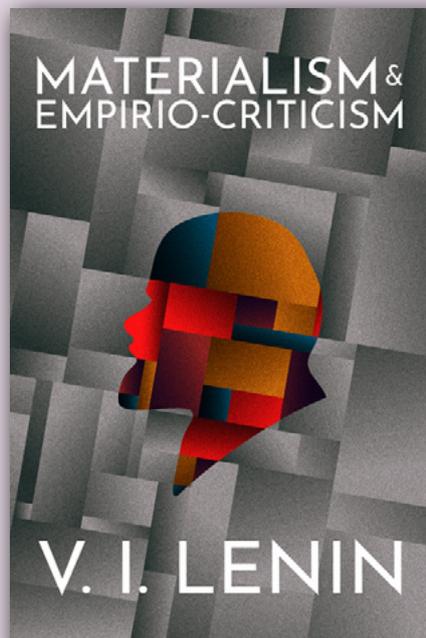
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ORDER MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM

In this classic text, Lenin brilliantly explains the fundamental principles of the materialist philosophy of Marxism. He defends them against idealist attacks from the subjective idealism of Machism, a philosophical trend, which at Lenin's time was becoming very fashionable, even within the workers movement. Step by step, layer by layer, quoting at length from the many trendy philosophical and scientific publications of the day, the book exposes idealism in all its guises. The aim was very simple: to bring out in the open the real difference between Marxist dialectical materialism



and subjective idealism, which in the last instance always leads to some form of religious world outlook.

Analysing the different shades and expressions of Machism internationally, Lenin stressed that "in every philosophical question raised by the new physics, we [trace] the struggle between materialism and idealism." And he showed that:

"Behind the mass of new terminological devices, behind the litter of erudite scholasticism, we invariably discerned two principal alignments, two fundamental trends in the solution of philosophical problems. Whether nature, matter, the physical, the external world should be taken as primary, and consciousness, mind, sensation (experience - as the widespread terminology of our time has it), the psychical, etc., should be regarded as secondary - that is the root question which in fact continues to divide the philosophers into two great camps."

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LETTERS

NEWSDESK@SOCIALIST.NET

SHAMEFUL LEAFLET

Dear Editor,

In yet another damning indictment of Starmer's reactionary leadership, a Labour Party leaflet has come to light which disgracefully refers to "Traveller incursions".

The nomadic Traveller (GRT) community has been subject to discrimination and harassment wherever they settle for centuries, as Britain's oldest minority.

In 2019, the Tory manifesto pledged to "tackle unauthorised traveller camps". The infamous Policing Bill would also criminalise the ancient way of life of Travellers. Leaflets such as the one referred to above are just pandering to prejudices whipped up by rich landowners, the Tories and the capitalist press.

The GRT community is not a threat to the working class. Instead, they are deprived of state support (Universal Credit, childcare benefits), increasingly barred from land on which to temporarily settle, and stereotyped as guilty of petty theft and poor hygiene.

As socialists, we should stand in solidarity with the GRT community and identify our true class enemy: the capitalists.

*Comradely,
Rahul Mehta, Margate (Kent)*

SIDING WITH OPEN REACTION

Dear Editor,

In this month in 1945, the prisoners of Buchenwald concentration camp staged an uprising, and seized control of the camp in anticipation of its liberation by Allied forces.

In early April the prisoners were soon to be evacuated and possibly executed, so they sent out a distress message in Morse code for Allied soldiers. When the US Third Army responded that they were coming to liberate the camp, the prisoners took up their arms and stormed the guard towers in anticipation of their liberation.

For many of the gay prisoners of the camp however, this wasn't to be. When the soldiers arrived, anyone convicted of the 'crime' of being gay was immediately imprisoned again and forced to serve

the full sentence given to them under the Nazi penal code. And so the Allies carried out the Nazi's barbarism for them, a real betrayal to the heroes of the Buchenwald resistance.

This isn't the only time the ruling class betrayed the workers of Europe to the Nazis either. On 30th January 1933, the liberals willingly handed state power over to Hitler, knowing that only the fascist movement could defeat the workers and protect private property.

We can have no faith in the capitalists to protect us from hatred and bigotry. They have shown time and time again that they will side with open reaction when it suits them.

The capitalist system is in crisis and the ruling class will go to any desperate lengths to defend it. The only way forward is a planned economy based on workers' democracy.

Cory Stone

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Dear Editor,

Recently, the government released a report stating that there is no institutional racism in the UK. That this came in the wake of a year of Black Lives Matter protests is by no means a coincidence.

This is not a miscalculation on the part of the ruling class. This is direct denial of the scourge of racism which affects society as a whole.

From police harassment to overcrowded housing, from worse health outcomes to economic inequality, the capitalist system is riddled with racism and discrimination.

As Marxists, we recognise that racism and other divisive tools are used by the capitalist class to prevent working class unity and cannot be eradicated under capitalism.

Sadly, the NHS is not exempt from institutional racism. BAME staff are under-represented at senior levels, more likely to be reported for disciplinary tribunals, and were poorly equipped with PPE during the pandemic.

Foreign-trained doctors, mostly BAME, receive less workplace protections and

training opportunities. Black patients experience higher levels of infant and maternal mortality and higher rates of psychiatric detention.

The above doesn't even cover the racism experienced by staff from patients, with 30% of BAME staff reporting racial harassment over the last year. The solution is not simply more BAME staff to be promoted or more 'independent reviews'. The NHS needs to be put under the control of workers, not out-of-touch bureaucrats. More generally, we must dismantle the material basis for racism itself: the capitalist system.

*Dr Raj Mistry
South East England*

TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY?

Dear Editor

At the time of writing (31 March), it is Trans day of visibility. Today, we have been treated to a deluge of virtue signalling from Blairites, Tories, and big corporations – all claiming to care ever so much about the liberation of trans people.

This appears to be all that capitalism can offer oppressed minorities: more 'visibility', more representation – they might even put you in one of their adverts!

But who pray-tell will represent us? Who will be 'more visible'? Clearly, it will be trans people whose world-view and perspectives align with those of the ruling class; that is rotten careerists looking for personal advancement.

It is clear, in my view, what 'more representation and visibility' really amounts to: the substitution of a united struggle for the rule of the bosses.

Trans day of visibility has been around since 2009 – 12 years – and none of the fundamental problems facing trans people have been solved; if anything they've been deepened by the present crisis of capitalism.

According to Stonewall 12% of trans people have been physically attacked in the workplace, 25% have been homeless at some point in their lives and NHS waiting lists to begin the process of medical transition have trans people waiting for years.

What needs to be done? We need an NHS fully publicly owned and under workers control; we need to expropriate the big pharma bosses to ensure access to hormone therapy for all who need it. We need secure housing, secure jobs, etc.

This is why there has never been a more important time in history to build the forces of Marxism in Britain and the world over. Only the ideas of Marxism can unite all the oppressed in a struggle against capitalism and finally bring an end, not just to transphobia, but to all forms of bigotry and oppression.

*Comradely,
Jessica Jordan
Sheffield Central CLP*

TELL THE TRUTH



IRELAND'S GREAT FAMINE

The Great Famine in Ireland from 1845 to 1852 constitutes the most nightmarish chapter in Ireland's history. Karl Marx once wrote that the famine 'killed poor devils only', and this is absolutely correct. The Famine was considered a god-send - quite literally! - by the English ruling class.

From their point of view, the bigger the famine the better. The English elites wanted to clear the Irish 'riff-raff' from their estates in order for agriculture to be revolutionised.

Landlords were keen to clear out the poor from their land. They wanted to raise more livestock and exportable food produce to increase their profits - whatever the cost. This resulted in an exodus of Biblical proportions; over one million deaths; and left a permanent scar that radicalised generations to come.

The landlords and food traders took enough cattle, sheep, pigs and cereal crops out of Ireland to feed the entire population twice over. The food exporters and importers of Ireland and England were profiteering while Irish women and children starved. And yet we are told to believe it was natural calamity; of which no side is to blame!

The British ruling class saw the Irish as loathly creatures. Many were influenced by the ideas of Thomas Malthus - who's theories of overpopulation were nothing short of genocidal. One representative at the time complained that the death toll *may not be enough!*

It was these cynical calculations and economic motivations that led to the tragedy that befell the people of Ireland.

Even before the famine, the majority of the Irish dwelled in mud huts, living on a diet consisting primarily of potatoes. The surplus potatoes went towards the rent for the grim hovels they lived in. Very often there was a life-or-death scramble to survive - where even a partial crop failure could result in families being turned out onto the road.

In 1845 there had been serious crop failures, but many managed to survive on whatever scraps they could salvage. Relief measures were also brought in by Robert Peel's Tory government, with public works schemes being made available. It was in 1846 that the potato famine arrived, affecting every part of the soil - and hell came riding on its back.

Though the Tory PM Robert Peel was deeply unpopular in Ireland, the worst was yet to come. The Whigs came to power in 1846 under the command of John Russell. Russell thought that the best thing the state could do is stand back, and leave the 'free' market to work its 'magic'.

This *laissez faire* approach resulted in the public works coming to an end. The policy that Ireland should deal with its own poverty reflected the mood of the English elite.

In total, 13% of the population was lost. Starvation was not the only fate

visited upon the long suffering Irish masses: diseases such as typhus and cholera preyed upon their weakened bodies. Evictions were wholesale, leaving the punitive workhouses brimming with entire communities. If workhouses weren't bad enough already, they became breeding grounds for disease.

The choice was between death or emigration. It is no surprise that between 1845-55, over two million emigrated in hope of a better standard of living. But even this did not prove a panacea. The ships carrying the Irish were known as 'coffin ships', since mortality rates of crossing the Atlantic stood at roughly 30% due to disease.

In 1848, in the midst of all this unbearable human misery, the heartless Trevelyan, a senior representative of the ruling class, claimed the Irish were 'suffering from an affliction of God's providence'. So there you have it - God was lending capitalism a hand by ridding the world of the 'morally evil' Irish!

As the great Irish revolutionary James Connolly later reflected, "*Had socialist principles been applied to Ireland in those days not one person need have died of hunger*".

Ultimately, this whole catastrophe occurred in order for the capitalists and landlords to increase their bottom line. In order to put an end to hunger and famine - which still afflict the world today - we must put an end to this capitalist horrorshow once and for all.

UNISON ELECTIONS

NO TO SECTARIANISM – FIGHT FOR THE REAL LEFT SLATE



Unison correspondent

In a few weeks' time, an historic election will take place in Unison, the biggest union in the country. At the beginning of May, the ballot opens for the union's National Executive Council (NEC), with 68 seats up for grabs. Crucially, the left has an opportunity to take control.

At present, the right-wing have a majority, but not a substantial one. This situation was clearly illustrated at an NEC meeting last autumn, when a debate was held over the NEC nomination for the Unison general secretary election.

The result was very close: 29 votes for the right wing's continuity candidate; and 26 for the left candidate, Paul Holmes. In addition, there were a few abstentions.

The right wing only scraped the nomination through by a whisker, after the ballot was tied in the first round of voting; and after they had changed from the usual voting system, with no prior notice.

Decisive moment

Unison is not only the biggest trade union in Britain – it also has a decisive position in the public sector. And the union plays an important role in the Labour Party, where it generally sides with the right wing. Significantly, it holds two seats on the Labour NEC.

Over many years, the right-wing Unison leadership have paid lip service to the fight against low pay, and the struggle against cuts and privatisation.

The government's announcement of a pay freeze in the public sector should have

been a green light for the whole of the trade union movement – and especially Unison – to come out fighting. Instead, the Unison leadership simply asked the Tories to 'do the right thing'.

Alongside the prospect of a pay freeze, we are also likely to see an avalanche of austerity in the wake of the pandemic. This ought to be enough to concentrate the minds of Unison members, and of members in all the other public sector trade unions as well.

At the same time, the recent Unison general secretary election saw the best performance by a left candidate in a generation. Put together, all these factors surely give particular importance to the forthcoming NEC elections.

Left slate

In large measure, the left in Unison has been rising to the challenge. Some 56 left candidates – grouped loosely around the team behind the Paul Holmes general secretary campaign – are standing in the NEC election.

This is the largest contingent of left candidates in many years. Last time around, in 2019, just 41 left candidates stood, winning 24 seats. With 68 seats to play for this time round, this means that the right wing had a head start, with many candidates standing unopposed.

The Paul Holmes campaign galvanised hundreds of new activists, and made a big splash on social media. In the end, Paul won some 45,220 votes. The left slate is now building on this advance.

Last time around, the left only stood two candidates across Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Northern and Eastern regions. That situation has massively changed.

In the Northern region, for example, where the Broad Left in Unison has been in abeyance for many years, and where the right wing have been elected unopposed for at least the last two elections, the Paul Holmes campaign has mobilised left activists.

Thanks to this, two left candidates are on the ballot paper for the region in these NEC elections. These comrades also won the endorsement of the biggest Labour left organisation in the region.

This growth in activity and support for left candidates reflects not only the impact of Paul's campaign, but also the mood amongst members; the fear of what the aftermath of the pandemic means in terms of jobs, wages, and services – both for workers, and for the people who rely on them.

Splits and sectarianism

Paul Holmes could have won the Unison general secretary position. But, shamefully, the left vote was split, allowing right-winger Christina McAnea to win.

Roger McKenzie, part of the union bureaucracy, attempted to pose as a 'left'. Hugo Pierre also stood as a candidate, on behalf of the Socialist Party (SP), a small, ultra-left sect. In the process, Pierre received the lowest vote of any general secretary candidate in the history of the union.

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The general secretary election came on the back of the retirement of Dave Prentis, who had been in office since 2000. Surely it was in the interests of the left to stand a single candidate? Surely the point of a left socialist candidate is first and foremost to advance the interests of the members?

This is elementary. But with at most a few dozen members in the union, the Socialist Party were primarily concerned about their prestige.

Their forces have been in decline for some time in Unison, and across the trade unions. Leading members, like Roger Bannister, have retired. Their organisation also suffered a damaging split in 2019, losing members in Britain and a large majority internationally.

Within Unison, the SP now have just four candidates on the NEC. This number has declined over the years. Standing a candidate in the general secretary election only managed to alienate many

The Paul Holmes campaign galvanised hundreds of new activists, and made a big splash on social media. In the end, Paul won some 45,220 votes. The left slate is now building on this advance.

activists, who might otherwise have given them a hearing.

Their campaign was seen as a distraction, at best; and as a wrecking tactic, at worst.

Time for real change

In these NEC elections, the Socialist Party are standing a handful of candidates, including for three seats that they already hold.

But scandalously, replicating their antics in the general secretary election, they are also standing against left candidates in seats currently held by right-wingers.

Once again, they are splitting the vote, potentially handing victory to right-wingers. Every seat counts in this election. Again, what are they hoping to achieve?

Out on a limb, eaten up by prestige politics, they are continuing in their sectarian ways. Due to their actions, they could rob the left of victory. They are playing with fire. Unison members looking for a way forward should turn their backs on such splitters.

Socialist Appeal supporters in Unison believe that the interests of members are best served by a vote in support of those candidates standing under the banner of #TimeForRealChange. ■

SUPPORT THE GRASSROOTS SLATE! FOR A FIGHTING LEADERSHIP!

Unison correspondent

The campaign to elect a new NEC in Unison, the largest union in Britain, is well underway. Grassroots candidates from every area of the public sector – in which Unison organises – are calling for a fighting leadership that can turn back the attacks that lie ahead.

All across the country, and in every sector where Unison organises, there is a clear need for a leadership that is prepared to struggle.

Attacks on the public sector are already occurring. Cash-strapped councils are using 'fire-and-rehire' tactics to pass cuts onto their workforces.

The Tories are imposing a pay freeze on public sector workers. And further austerity will hit local government hard.

Given this, it is very encouraging to see the success of grassroots candidates, such as Lilly Boulby, who is standing for the National Young Members Female seat.

Putting forward a clear fighting programme, Lilly has secured 128 nominations from Unison branches across the

country – a record number for a youth candidate.

Lilly has achieved this by standing on an unapologetically socialist platform. She has called for attention to the particular crisis facing young workers; the low pay and precarity across the public sector; and the mental health issues caused by stress, which especially affect NHS workers.

Socialist candidate Terry McPartlan also spoke to Socialist Appeal recently. He is standing in the North East Male seat. And like Lilly, Terry is arguing for Unison to use its full weight in the battles that members face.

"It's unfortunate that there's another candidate putting themselves forward and potentially splitting the left vote in the North East [see article above]," Terry commented, "but that's not my main focus."

"The main task is to defeat the right wing here

and everywhere; and to win a socialist leadership for Unison."

These are just two of the 56 grassroots candidates who will be asking Unison members for their votes in the upcoming NEC elections.

Each of these candidates understands that the whole trade union movement must prepare for battle. The government has made it clear that they expect our class to pay for the current crisis.

Unison needs a leadership prepared to draw a line in the sand and fight uncompromisingly for its members and the wider working class.



Pictured: Lilly Boulby and Terry McPartlan

DVLA WORKERS STRIKE BACK

Maciej Krzymieniecki

PCS DVLA union rep &

Young Members organiser

(personal capacity)

6 April marked the first day of an unprecedented strike at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) offices in Swansea.

DVLA workers, organised in PCS, undertook a four-day strike, demanding safe working conditions and a reduction of numbers on site.

Out of 6,000 employees at the Swansea DVLA offices, almost 2,000 still have to attend the site regularly. Now we are saying to management: enough is enough!

The strike was a resounding success, with around 1,400 workers taking part. PCS members working from home also joined in, undertaking action short of strike and working to rule. Local union membership is at an all time high.

Comrades in the CWU refused to drive Royal Mail lorries to the DVLA offices. We also received numerous donations to our strike fund.

We had an excellent rally on the opening day of the strike, where a number of speakers highlighted the shameful working conditions at the DVLA offices.

This strike follows on from a very successful ballot campaign. 72% voted for strike action, on a turnout that surpassed the 50% threshold imposed by the Tories.

This is a remarkable result. The turnout and support for strike action was certainly unexpected by the bosses.

With the number of workers still on site, our members are sitting on a ticking time

FIGHT FOR SAFE WORKPLACES!



Image: Natasha Hirst

bomb. We cannot afford to sleepwalk into disaster again. How many more infections and deaths have to occur before they allow us to work from home?

Every member has a story. And we have a very clear demand: No return to site until it is completely safe.

We were told that we can't work from home, because of 'data protection' and 'IT issues'. Of course, that isn't an issue for the bosses, who have been working from home since the beginning.

What we're being told are mere excuses. Management simply doesn't trust us. They hold us in contempt. This is a reflection of the same contempt that this Tory government has towards all workers.

Following this strike, the struggle for safe working conditions continues.

We also hope that other workers – who face similar issues in their workplaces – will take inspiration from our example

and join the fightback. A united struggle by the whole labour movement can help transform millions of workers' lives for the better.

We call on all our readers to raise this strike in their trade union branches and local Labour parties. Send solidarity messages on social media. And donate to our strike fighting fund.

- No return to workplaces until it is completely safe! For an immediate plan to begin working from home, supervised by the union.
- Those workers who are needed on site must receive full protection, including genuine social distancing, lateral flow and COVID tests, and fast-tracked vaccination.
- Support and solidarity from the whole labour movement! A victory for DVLA workers is a victory for the whole working class! ■

GOODLORD STRIKE CONTINUES

FIGHT BACK AGAINST 'FIRE AND REHIRE'!

Martha Davenport

UAL Marxists

Tech workers organised by Unite have been on strike since 22 February, taking action against attacks on wages and conditions.

In October, London-based letting platform Goodlord announced that its

employees would be offered new contracts to replace their current temporary ones. On average, workers were hit with a 20% pay reduction, on top of other cuts to maternity, holiday, and sick pay.

Goodlord bosses attempted to justify this by claiming that since these workers are now working from home, they are no longer required to live in London – and therefore don't require a London wage!

Workers at Goodlord saw this excuse as a blatant attempt by the bosses to cover their own backs.

In an interview with Socialist Appeal activists on the picket line, striking worker Scott explained: "They said move out of London or just find another job. That is not acceptable to us."

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This ‘fire-and-rehire’ tactic has become increasingly popular amongst bosses everywhere in recent months, as the capitalist class scrambles to ensure greater profits.

This example is just one of many cases that offer a glimpse of the struggles to come, as the crisis of capitalism intensifies.

For the last eight weeks, striking workers have been holding demonstrations and regular pickets outside of the offices of Goodlord’s clients, alongside running a social media campaign to put pressure on the bosses.

Campaigners are also looking to organise a student boycott of the online services that Goodlord provides to various estate agents.

From talking to different strikers on the picket line, it is clear that a majority of the Goodlord workers had never been

on strike before; nor had they previously joined a union, until the dispute.

The militant action from these young workers – in an industry ill-famed for its low union membership – shows the speed at which events can develop, even in non-unionised workplaces, in this turbulent epoch.

Despite a lack of response from management, morale amongst strikers is still high.

One striker said: “We are at a standstill with management...but we’re going to keep being out here. We’ll keep picketing until they give us a living wage.”

The strike was initially planned to last two weeks. But it quickly escalated into an indefinite action. And organisers are already planning to re-ballot in June.

As the crisis deepens, new layers of young workers are going to be thrown into

struggles just like that faced by workers at Goodlord.

The trade unions must support workers as they take militant action and fight back against the bosses. Only through this organisation, support, and solidarity can workers ensure victory. ■



DELIVEROO STRIKE SOLIDARITY WITH RIDERS!

Joana Soares

Ealing Central

and Acton CLP

On 7 April, hundreds of Deliveroo bike couriers (‘riders’), organised by the Independent Workers’ Union of Great Britain (IWGB), went on strike to demand better pay and basic workers’ rights. This action coincided with the company going public on the London Stock Exchange.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be a godsend for Deliveroo, which was previously struggling. With millions of households relying on home deliveries during lockdown, provided by around 50,000 casually employed couriers, the company has turned its fortunes around.

The company’s obscene profits have been squeezed out of thousands of severely exploited Deliveroo riders, who have literally risked life and limb to keep people fed during the pandemic.

The infamous food delivery firm is one of the biggest players in the so-called ‘gig economy’ – a highly exploitative model of bogus self-employment, involving around 4.7 million workers, where people undertake casual shift work for low pay.

Deliveroo does not pay its riders a fixed rate; instead, couriers only get paid for making a delivery. And because these workers are classified as self-employed, the company is under no obligation to

provide sick pay, holidays, or a minimum wage.

A recent study into thousands of invoices has revealed that a third of Deliveroo drivers earn less than the minimum wage of £8.70 an hour. And under pressure to make fast deliveries, riders are at serious risk of injury on the road.

In 2018, Deliveroo bosses spent millions defeating a court case lodged by the IWGB to give riders the right to engage in collective bargaining.

The union won a major victory in November last year, however, when the High Court ruled that gig economy workers must now receive the same health and safety protections as those legally classified as ‘employees’.

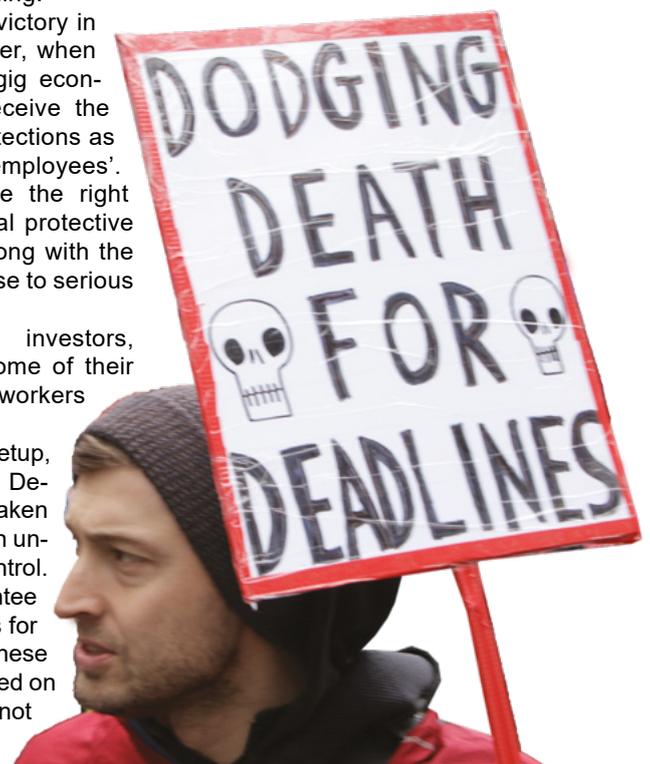
This means riders have the right to be provided with personal protective equipment by Deliveroo, along with the “right to stop work in response to serious and imminent danger”.

This victory spooked investors, worried about sacrificing some of their profits in order to provide workers with basic rights.

Instead of this rotten setup, ‘gig economy’ platforms like Deliveroo and Uber should be taken into public ownership, and run under democratic workers’ control. This is the only way to guarantee decent wages and conditions for workers; and to ensure that these important services are provided on the basis of society’s needs, not investors’ profits.

The labour movement should boldly put forward this demand, whilst offering their full support and solidarity to the Deliveroo riders’ strike.

This should be linked to a mass drive by the trade unions to organise workers in the gig economy; and to a determined campaign by the Labour Party in defence of workers’ rights, and for a clear socialist economic programme. ■



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